
Leasing the Hungerford Library building to Hungerford Town Council to increase community benefit

1. Proposal

- 1.1 The net cost of Hungerford Library in 2016-17 was £62.5k.
- 1.2 The council's proposal for the new library service in Hungerford is to maintain the opening hours of 25 hours a week, reduce the staff from 2 to 1 during opening hours and recruit volunteers to support the service. The building is closed the rest of the time.
- 1.3 The net cost in 2017-18 is £33k – a saving of £28.5k - provided that
 - (1) HTC make an annual contribution based upon population of £5250 a year.
 - (2) HTC continue to rent an office in the building for £5000 a year.
- 1.4 HTC have considered our request and instead propose that:
 - (1) they assume the responsibility of the building to make better use of it for community purposes. This includes paying the premises costs incurred by the library service and not paying rent for their office in the building and not making the £5250 contribution we have requested.
 - (2) we restore the staffing level to how it was last year – 2 members of staff rather than the current 1. It is the 3rd busiest library in West Berkshire and they believe that warrants a higher level of paid staffing than. The cost of restoring the staffing levels is an extra £16,670 including (NI, LGPS), although we would reduce the casual staff and overtime budgets as there would be less need to cover staff holiday/other absence than in a single staffed library.
 - (3) They set up a CIO (charity) to operate the building which would be entitled to relief on the business rates (currently £15.3k a year). This is a saving for them which does not affect our base budgets, as we do not benefit directly from the rates – see 1.6 below.
- 1.5 HTC's proposal brings the net cost incurred by the council to £31k – a saving of £30.8k on 2016-17 - and has the potential to greatly increase community access for a wider range of events and activities.
- 1.6 The business rates for Hungerford Library are currently £15,300 a year. The library budget, in effect, transfers this amount from its budget to the council's Exchequer Services. 49% is due to the council, 1% (£153) is paid to the Fire Authority and 50% is paid to the Government. If the CIO set up to operate the building receives 100%

relief on the business rates, this will reduce the operating costs of the building while saving the council £7.6k portion of the rates we pay to the Government. However, the Fire Authority would no longer benefit from the 1% (£153) from the business rates.

- 1.7 Hungerford Library was valued in 2013 at £656,800 using the Depreciated Replacement Cost method which calculates the depreciation of the original cost of the building over time. This is not a true value in terms of the confidence or otherwise of the current property market.

Hungerford Library	2016-2017 ACTUALS	2017-2018 BUDGET	Working with HTC		Notes
			WBC	HTC	
Expenditure					
Employees	44339	23560	45000	0	Restoring staff levels from 1 to 2 library staff
Premises / Supplies & Services					
Maint contractors	4973	5,350	0	5000	
Energy costs	2132	2,040	0	2500	
Rates	17147	15,300		3200	80% rate relief.
Cleaning	3468	3,260		850	
Waste	847	820	0	500	
Minor repairs	1143	1,120	0	2500	
Insurance	0	0	0	300	
Professional fees	0	0	0	300	
Training	0	0	0	300	
Catering	0	50	200	500	
Equipment	150	160	300	200	
Phones / Broadband	201	300	0	1500	
Advertising	9	150	170	300	
Print & stationary	321	170			
Total expenditure	74730	52,280	45670	17950	
Income					
Library fees, charges	-7200	-13,220	-14000		
HTC office rent	-5000	-5200	0		
Total income	-12200	-18,420	-14000		
Net cost to Council	£62,500	33,860	31,670		
net saving on 2016-17 budget		28640			
net saving working with HTC			30830		

2. Options for Consideration

- 2.1 To accept the proposal and work with HTC to develop library and community activities in Hungerford Library building.
- 2.2 Not to lease the building and continue with current arrangements and seek alternative ways of meeting the library service savings target with the risk that we may lose HTC's co-operation in helping to increase community involvement in the library service and the library building.

- 2.3 Disposal of the asset at a commercial value. This would require planning permission for a change of use. The library and HTC's office would have to be relocated in alternative premises, we would have to seek alternative ways of meeting the library service savings target with the risk that we would lose HTC's co-operation in helping to increase community involvement in the library service and the library building.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 HTC's proposal meets the required saving while having the potential for more community benefit.
- 3.2 The Asset Management Group (AMG) considered HTC's request to grant the leasehold of Hungerford Library on Friday 23rd June. The AMG recommended that the council does so, subject to agreement of the Heads of Terms of the lease and further consideration of HTC's proposal for operating the building and meeting the saving required for the Library Service budget.
- The proposal meets the saving required for Hungerford Library. It is the 3rd busiest library in West Berkshire and HTC's proposal makes it possible to meet the saving while having 2 rather than 1 members of staff to deliver the service.
 - The proposal, although not without some risks, has the capability of delivering more community use of the library building while involving local people directly in making it a success.
 - The current situation whereby the council funds a community building to be open 25 hours a week does not represent good value for the council or local people.
 - The council retains the freehold of the asset.
 - The statutory library service will continue to be the responsibility of the council and will be delivered in the library building.

4. Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 Hungerford Town Council members and the Friends of Hungerford Library.
- 4.2 All parish councils have received updates on the library review including the proposals for Hungerford.
- 4.3 WBC members for the Hungerford ward.
- 4.4 WBC Executive portfolio member for culture.
- 4.5 WBC Property and Legal Services.
- 4.6 WBC Officer Liaison Group for community asset transfer applications.
- 4.7 Asset Management Group (24 June 2017).

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only
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Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:

- BEC – Better educated communities**
- P&S – Protect and support those who need it**
- HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities**
- MEC – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- BEC1 – Improve educational attainment**
 - BEC2 – Close the educational attainment gap**
 - HQL1 – Support communities to do more to help themselves**
 - MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council**
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Officer details:

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Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:**
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:**
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;**
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.**
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”**

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	To agree to the transfer of the freehold of Hungerford library to Hungerford Town Council.
Summary of relevant legislation:	
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Paul James
Date of assessment:	26/06/2017

Is this a:		Is this:	
		New or proposed	Yes
Strategy	Yes	Already exists and is being reviewed	No
Function	No	Is changing	Yes/
Service	No		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To transfer the freehold of Hungerford Library to Hungerford Town Council
Objectives:	To secure a partnership with HTC whereby the council provide the statutory library service in Hungerford and HTC are able to increase usage of the building for community purposes. To meet the council's savings target in respect of the library service. To increase community involvement in libraries. To increase the hours the building is open for community events and activities.
Outcomes:	The Hungerford library building is owned by the local community and has a sustainable future for a variety of community uses including a library.
Benefits:	Increased library usage. More community use of a public building. More community involvement in how community services such as libraries are run and are responsive to local needs

2. Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	HTC's proposal aims to increase local community involvement and usage of an important community asset.
Disability	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Gender Reassignment	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Race	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Religion or Belief	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Sex	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events	

	and activities for this group.	
Sexual Orientation	The proposal has the potential to increase access to library and other community services, events and activities for this group.	
Further Comments relating to the item:		

3. Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: the proposal is most likely to reduce inequality by greatly increasing access to community events and activities.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: the proposal is most likely to reduce inequality by greatly increasing access to community events and activities.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	Yes
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	Paul James
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	July 2017

Name: Paul James

Date: 27 June 2017

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) (rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.