

**AGENDA ITEM: 8**

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Meeting	Cabinet Resources Committee
Date	17 March 2005
<b>Subject</b>	<b>South Friern Library and adjoining premises</b>
Report of	Cabinet Member for Resources Cabinet Member for Performance, Partnerships and Best Value
Summary	To report the outcome of the tender invitation and to seek approval for the next phase of the process.

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Officer Contributors	David Stephens, Chief Valuer and Development Manager
Status (public or exempt)	Public (with a separate exempt section)
Wards affected	Coppetts
Enclosures	Appendix A – Submission summaries
For decision by	Committee
Function of	Executive
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	N/A

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## **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the two tenderers listed in the exempt report be invited to work up scheme proposals for discussion with the Head of Planning and to submit final financial offers with the results being reported to a future meeting of the committee.**

## **2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 2.1 Council 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004 resolved to keep South Friern Library open for a further six months whilst possible redevelopment options were considered.
- 2.2 Cabinet Resources Report 18<sup>th</sup> March 2004 approved the invitation to interested parties to submit redevelopment proposals to include the re-provision of a library facility.

## **3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan commits the Council to plan and manage land use and development in Barnet to enhance the quality of life and provide tangible benefits for the community. Depending upon the option chosen, the proposals in this report could result in the achievement of a new library facility and/or a capital receipt which could be used to assist in funding the capital programme.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan commits the Council to “modernise and reposition libraries in the heart of the community”. The replacement of South Friern Library will contribute to this objective being achieved.
- 3.3 The Library Service contributes to the Council’s key priorities of delivering a first class education service and supporting the vulnerable in our community.

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 The selected tenderers will be set deadlines by which to prepare their schemes, have discussions with the Head of Planning and submit their final offers. The successful tenderer will be expected to exchange contracts conditional only upon the grant of planning permission for its agreed scheme.

## **5. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council will need to employ the equivalent of 3.5 full time staff to manage the replacement library facility. If one of the schemes is to proceed there will need to be a revenue budget adjustment from April 2005 to put back into the base budget for libraries the running costs for the replacement facility for South Friern library.
- 5.2 The financial implications are set out in the exempt report.
- 5.3 The property issues are set out below.

## **6. LEGAL ISSUES**

- 6.1 None

## **7. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS**

- 7.1 Constitution – Part 3 - Responsibility for Functions – Section 3.6 Functions delegated to the Cabinet Resources committee – All matters relating to land and buildings owned, rented or proposed to be acquired or disposed of by the Council.

## **8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 8.1 In accordance with the decision of this committee, the property was widely marketed, inviting interested parties to submit proposals for the provision of a new library facility.
- 8.2 In regard to the new library facility, interested parties were invited to use their skills and innovation to provide a facility of a gross floor area of approximately 400 sq m. The space should be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act with the public area being open plan and having flexibility of use. Interested parties were asked to submit plans and drawings of the proposed facility, build and fit-out costs if applicable, a programme of works, the tenure to be offered to the Council and, if applicable, the service charge.
- 8.3 By the closing date 9 submissions had been received – 3 included more than 1 development option. The detail of the submissions and comments thereon are set out in Appendix A and in the exempt report.
- 8.4 There are a range of redevelopment proposals and a wider range of offers. Some schemes are clearly unacceptable from a planning view-point and others failed to meet the Council's development criteria. Similarly, some of the financial offers, particularly those aspects dealing with the lease-back to the Council and the rent payable therefore do not present a good deal for the Council.
- 8.5 High-lighted in Appendix A and in the exempt report are the submissions which it is considered at this stage have some basis for further consideration. The scheme proposals submitted so far are insufficient to say whether or not a planning permission is likely to be recommended for approval. It is recommended therefore that these two be invited to develop their schemes further in consultation with the Head of Planning and submit final offers for consideration by a future meeting of the committee.

## **9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 None.

BS: DVP

BT: CM

# APPENDIX A

Bid No.	TENDERER	PROPOSAL	LIBRARY FACILITY	PLANNING COMMENT	OTHER COMMENT
1	Intro Homes	A mixed use scheme combining a replacement library facility and 25 residential units. 30% of the residential units are to be shared ownership at 100% TCI. No allowance has been made for a S106 contribution.	The library facility will form a large portion of the 1st floor (4035 sq ft), and is offered either inclusive or exclusive of fit-out. The freehold of the premises will be transferred to Intro Homes. Intro Homes will grant the Council a 999 year lease of the library element.	There is concern over visual intrusion and an overbearing impact of the building upon adjoining occupiers. The parking provision will provide a harsh environment - it is probably inadequate and does not meet the current requirements. The residential element is above the affordable housing threshold. The proposal appears to have potential which could be more fully addressed through detailed plans.	The scheme is expected to be complete after 20 months. Housing Strategy Officers believe the scheme to be too expensive, having been based on 100% TCI. It is also felt that the units ought to be for rent.
2	Pearcroft Limited	A mixed use scheme combining a replacement library facility and a 14 unit residential development. The development is a 4 storey building with communal garden at the rear. It also includes a single 2 storey house with attached private garden.	To be built to a shell finish only with the Council having to pay for the fitting out. The Council to cover utility payments and a small service charge (not detailed) for building insurance and maintenance of the physical envelope. The freehold of the site will be transferred to Pearcroft Limited. Pearcroft Ltd will offer the Council the grant of a 125 year lease of the library element.	The full three storey elevation to both roads is inconsistent with the 2 storey plus pitched roof character of the area. There is concern over the compatibility of balconies with the street scene. The scheme includes a retail unit which could add to the vitality of the town centre. The proposal appears to have potential which could be more fully addressed through detailed plans.	The anticipated hand-over of the library to the Council will be 12 months after construction commences, with completion of the residential units 6 months later.
3	Acorn Homes	<b>Option One</b> - a mixed use scheme combining 2 x 2 semi-detached houses and a separate library building with 10 flats above.	The library will be built to provide approximately 400 sq m of space, and will be fully fitted. The freehold of the site will be transferred to Acorn Homes. It is	A sensitive design approach could overcome vista issues. The building heights of 2 storey plus roof along Sutton Road are consistent with the established street scene. Both the level of	Construction period of 65 weeks.

		<b>Option Two</b> - a purely residential scheme and does not incorporate the provision of a replacement library facility.	mentioned that the library will be “handed back” to Barnet, although no detail as to the likely tenure, term or rent is given.	parking provision and amenity space appears to be acceptable, and the buildings are positioned so as to minimise the impact upon adjoining premises. The proposal appears to have potential which could be more fully addressed through detailed plans.	
4	Higgins Homes Ltd	A mixed use scheme combining a replacement library facility and an 18 unit residential development. The library will be situated on the first floor. The 18 x 2-bed flats will be arranged over 4 storeys, with parking at basement/ground floor level.	The library will be built to a shell finish only. All main services (water, drainage and electricity) will be made available. The Council will have to pay for the fitting out of the interior. There will be no provision of library car parking. The freehold of the site will be transferred to Higgins Homes. Higgins Homes will offer the Council a 250 year lease.	The proposed 3 storey development is not consistent with the established building heights. The scale of the scheme is felt to be excessive, involving large hard surfaced areas with little green space for amenity use. The scheme has some good design points, but there are too many deficiencies to allow the scheme to be favourably recommended.	Hand over of library shell after 50 weeks.
5	Origin Housing Group	<p><b>Option One</b> - a replacement library (inclusive of fit-out), together with a 24 unit residential development.</p> <p><b>Option Two</b> the same as option one, although it does not include the fit-out of the library facility.</p> <p><b>Option Three</b> - a 31 unit residential development, with no library facility.</p>	The library will be built on two floors with lift access. Internal fit-out could be included or excluded depending upon the option chosen. The freehold of the site would be transferred to Origin Housing Group. Origin would then grant the Council a 15 year lease of the library facility.	A predominantly 3 storey development, although these parts are not significantly higher than the adjacent 2 storey (plus roof) buildings. It therefore generally respects the contours of the site, although the 4 storey section in the corner is felt to be unduly prominent. Car parking provision is inadequate. All of the residential units are to be affordable. The scheme has some good ideas, but attempts to incorporate too much on the site.	Project completion in 23 months. The bid is dependent upon the receipt of Social Housing Grant from the Housing Corporation.
6	Structadene Ltd	<b>Option One</b> - retail units at	The public area of the	A mixed-use proposal, with all of	

		<p>pavement level on the Colney Hatch Lane elevation, with the library facility above. 8 live/work units above the library. Parking at basement level. A separate 3-storey block of flats to the rear incorporating 14 units.</p> <p><b>Option Two</b> - a variation on option one, with further provision of residential units through the inclusion of two additional floors above the library.</p> <p><b>Option Three</b> - a variation on option one which removes the retail element and replaces it with residential units</p>	<p>library facility will be provided with 400 sqm on the first floor, with access from a ground floor entrance at the corner of Colney Hatch Lane and Sutton Road (90 sqm). An additional 90 sqm of space will be available at basement level for storage.</p>	<p>the options involving almost total site coverage by buildings, hard-surfaced areas and an underground car park. There is concern that the contours of the site have not been taken into consideration as the ground floor plan shows entry to shops on Colney Hatch Lane, but also entry into flats on Sutton Road – which is one storey lower.</p> <p><b>Option one</b> – The scheme does not observe the building line, resulting in a large projection in front of the parade that lies to the north. The live/work units are not felt to be suitable for this situation. Inadequate car parking. The building fronting Sutton Road has excessive bulk, scale and mass.</p> <p><b>Option two &amp; three</b> – Both schemes are out of scale with the surroundings, offering 4 storey developments next to the existing 2 storey residences of Sutton Road (with a 5 storey tower feature in the corner). The schemes share the same issues as mentioned for option one with regard to positioning, parking and the viability of the live/work units.</p>	
7	Phoenix Estates (St Albans) Ltd	A mixed use scheme combining a replacement library facility, office headquarters for the Disability Action Group in the Borough of Barnet, office headquarters for	The ground floor library facility will be built to a shell finish with the Council having to pay for fit out. All main services would be provided. However, a contribution towards fit out	A mixed-use development involving a number of community uses. The taller parts of the development are sited where they would have greatest impact upon residential amenity. There are limited “soft” areas	Hand over will be 27 months after legal acquisition of the site. Subject to proposed timescales the existing library could be kept open until the end of November 2005.

		Barnet Voluntary Service Council, a new centre for independent living and a 12-unit residential development.	will be offered in the form of a rent free period of 3 months. The freehold of the site will be transferred to Phoenix Estates. Phoenix will offer the Council a lease term of either 25 years ( <b>Option 1</b> ) or 125 years ( <b>Option 2</b> ). All rents will be charged exclusive of rates. Service charges will be proportional based upon floor areas.	and inadequate provision of car parking.	
8	Safeland Plc,	Not detailed	Not detailed	N/A	This offer is not compliant with the tender invitation
9	MBS Construction	The submission details a mixed use scheme combining 9 residential flats, a replacement library facility and a primary care centre.	The library facility will be located on the ground floor level adjoining the proposed primary care centre. The library would be fully fitted. Access would be via an entrance on the corner of Colney Hatch Lane and Sutton Road. The freehold of the site would be transferred to MBS Construction. MBS would offer the Council a 99 year lease of the library facility.	A mixed-use development, incorporating a library and replacement health care centre. The tower feature on the corner of Sutton Road could be unduly prominent. Building lines have been largely safeguarded and the existing "open space" retained. Parking provision is inadequate, and roof gardens could result in overlooking. The scheme provides limited information with regards to design and levels at the site. However, its general form and content could work.	Total development completed in 134 weeks from acceptance of bid. The PCT has been approached on an informal basis in relation to the proposed health clinic. It is intended that the scheme be operated as a LIFT project.