

	<p>ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS BY OFFICER 9th November 2015</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Authorisation to procure external support for Library Service public consultation</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Chris Munday, Commissioning Director (Children and Young People)</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>None</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Andrew Merritt-Morling – Project Manager: 020 8359 7024 andrew.merritt-morling@barnet.gov.uk</p>

Summary

This report seeks permission to procure a third-party specialist organisation to independently facilitate consultation events, analyse feedback from the public, and produce a final report for the 2015/16 consultation on the future of Barnet's Library Services.

The successful bidder will be expected to facilitate consultation events, analyse feedback received and produce an overall report on the consultation outcomes. If time allows, the provider will also offer advice on the construction of the questionnaire.

Decisions

To authorise the procurement exercise for the provision of support to the consultation on the Council's strategy for the future of the Library Service.

Indications suggest the total cost will be less than £35,000 and will be funded from the existing Library Transformation funding already allocated to the development of the Library Strategy.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 On 12th October, a Special Meeting of the Children's, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding (CELS) Committee took place, where a proposal for the future delivery of library services in Barnet was discussed.
- 1.2 CELS referred the report to Full Council which subsequently approved the report on 20th October. Full Council approved the recommendations laid out in the reporting and delegated responsibility for their delivery to Officers (particularly recommendations 3, 4 and 5).
- 1.3 This public consultation period is the second in a space of 12-months and is in response for the Library Service to save up to £2.85m as its contribution to a wider Council saving of £98.4m. The first consultation on libraries took place between 10th November 2014 and 15th February 2015.
- 1.4 As part of the review of the existing Library Service, the Council has investigated a new and innovative way to provide library services more effectively and efficiently. The model has been considered in the context of local need and using what library users and other residents have said in the previous consultation.
- 1.5 As part of the review, the latest consultation will be with Barnet residents, library users, library staff and a range of other stakeholders to understand their views about the proposals before any decisions are made. The Council also wants to ensure the consultation is part of a longer-term programme of involvement of Barnet residents, community groups and other stakeholders in libraries to develop and deliver our long-term library strategy.
- 1.6 The consultation will inform the development of the full business case, which will be considered by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee in spring 2016.

2. REASONS FOR DECISIONS

- 2.1 Barnet Council want to commission an expert facilitator in community engagement and research to complete a range of consultation events (drop-in sessions, focus groups, etc.) with targeted groups, staff and the public. This will ensure that we meet our obligation to effectively consult with relevant stakeholders, and to independently analyse and report on the results of that consultation.
- 2.2 To deliver a compliant contract in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules a quotation exercise is required to be released through Barnet's procurement portal. Authorisation to procure is required to enable the release of quotation documents. Assessment of suitable frameworks will be undertaken to confirm best route to market which will meet the priorities of the project. Should it be

determined that framework call-off meets the requirement this will be undertaken.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3.1 Although the consultation events, analysis and report could be conducted in-house by the Council, the high level of interest associated with the future of Barnet's library services leads us to conclude that it is best to engage an independent organisation.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The second round of public consultation began on 28th October. It will run for a period of 10 weeks, concluding on 6th January.
- 4.2 Throughout the consultation period, the provider will be required to deliver a range of consultation activities, including focus groups with Barnet residents and library staff.
- 4.3 The provider will also be commissioned to write a consultation report, including analysis of the consultation surveys.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.1.1 The requirement is beneath OJEU threshold for services, £172,514 however Contract Procedure Rules Appendix 1 Table A thresholds require a procurement exercise to be undertaken.

6. Legal and Constitutional References

- 6.1 The commissioning of this work will be carried out in accordance with Barnet Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Procurement Code of Practice.
- 6.2 In accordance with the Constitution, Article 22 (Contract Procedure Rules), paragraph 17 of Appendix 1 (Table A), a Director or Assistant Director may provide authorisation to seek quotations for the provision of services where the value is between £25,001 and £172,514. The authorisation documentation is a Full Officer DPR or inclusion on the Forward Plan.
- 6.3 Article 22 of the Constitution (Contract Procedure Rules), paragraph 12.1, requires every contract to be in a form approved by the Monitoring Officer (in

consultation with HB Public Law), or delegated officer, if its value exceeds £245,000 or where appropriate to the nature of the contract.

- 6.4 Article 22 of the Constitution (Contract Procedure Rules), paragraph 17, Appendix 1 (Table A) confirms that a Director or Assistant Director, acting in accordance with the directorate scheme of delegation, being an “Approved Officer” may accept a quotation to award a contract of this value by way of a Summary DPR.

7.0 Risk Management

- 7.1 There is a considerable amount of public interest in the consultation and therefore a chance that the Council will need additional consultation events which could increase the cost of the work.

8.0 Equalities and Diversity

- 8.1 The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty outlined at section 149, require the council and all other organisations exercising public functions on its behalf to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination.
- 8.2 A full Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) and Needs Assessment have been carried out as part of this Library Service Review.
- 8.3 The Equality Impact Assessment carried out for the Library Options paper and presented to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on October 28th 2014 identified several issues which the Council wished to address through the consultation.
- 8.4 Data suggested a possible negative differential impact of the proposals was identified for some equality groups. These included children and young people, people with learning disabilities, people with sensory impairments, people with disabilities, unemployed people, older people and Muslim library users. The consultation was specified to include targeted work with these groups to identify potential issues and mitigating actions in more detail.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of the Full Council

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=162&Mid=8340&Ver=4>

10. DECISION TAKER'S STATEMENT

- 10.1 I have the required powers to make the decision documented in this report. I am responsible for the report's content and am satisfied that all relevant advice has been sought in the preparation of this report and that it is compliant with the decision making framework of the organisation which includes Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Budget and Policy Framework and Legal issues including Equalities obligations.

11. OFFICER'S DECISION

I authorise the following action

- 11.1 The procurement exercise to seek quotations for support for the consultation on the Council's strategy for the future of the Library Service, including facilitating consultation events, analysing feedback received, and producing an overall report on the consultation.
- 11.2 The value will be approximately £35,000 and will be found from the existing Library Transformation budget.

Signed



Commissioning Director (Children and Young People)

09/11/2015

Date
