

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Bram Kainth, Strategic Director of Environment

Date: 30/03/2023

Subject: Askew Road Library proposals for future provision

Report of: Steve Hollingworth, Assistant Director Leisure, Sport & Culture

Report author: Daniel Waller, Library & Archives Service Manager

SUMMARY

To ensure the long-term provision and improvement of Library services at Askew Road Library, and to deliver cost efficiencies, it is proposed to contract with Citizens Advice Hammersmith and Fulham (CAHF) for the delivery of services for 5 years from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028. CAHF will provide 2 full time staff who will manage a team of volunteers, whilst book stock and other services such as Internet PCs will continue to be provided through the existing arrangements, with the council retaining a consistent service across all library sites. CAHF have been successfully providing the library service at Avonmore library and neighbourhood centre since 2012. The proposed 5 year lease term aligns with the arrangement in place at Avonmore Library (also ending on 31 March 2028).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To award a contract to CAHF to operate Askew Road Library for a term of 5 years, starting on 1 April 2023 and ending on 31 March 2028 at a total contract cost of £481,620 (approximately £96,000 per annum).
 2. To approve the Heads of Terms for the lease for the occupation of Askew Road Library to CAHF and to delegate the negotiation of final terms of the lease and entering into the Lease with CAHF to the Strategic Director of Economy in consultation with Assistant Director of Legal services.
-

Wards Affected: Coningham, Wendell Park

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	By expanding the range of services available at Askew Road Library to include those offered by CAHF, we will provide access to advice, support and training, that can impact positively on individuals' economic well-being.
Creating a compassionate council	The expanded range of services available at the library will provide easily accessible advice and support to vulnerable members of the local community.
Doing things with local	Working with CAHF will provide opportunities for co-

residents, not to them	production with a well-established local organisation. Opportunities for volunteering in the service will enable local residents to receive valuable experience and enable to make a contribution to their community.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Financial efficiencies will be achieved by this proposal that will impact positively on pressures within the Leisure, Sport & Culture budget.
Taking pride in H&F	Increasing the range of services available at the library will provide a comprehensive community hub that local residents can be proud of.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Co-production with CAHF will provide opportunities for widening awareness of the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency.

Financial Impact

The controllable budget for Askew Road library for 2023/24 is £162,000 (£187,100 expenditure partially offset by £25,100 income). Under the proposed operating model, the majority of operating costs will be retained by the council. However, a net annual saving of £61,452 (38%) will be achieved from reduced staff costs (as staffing of the library will be delivered by CAHF), reduced business rates (as CAHF will make a contribution to this), and new rental income from CAHF (for the office used exclusively by them as a call centre). There are no expected redundancy costs relating to the reduction in staffing, as existing permanent staff are not site specific and so will be redeployed to vacancies at other libraries (there will be an ultimate reduction in staff employed across the library service on a temporary basis).

The new annual grant payable to CAHF will be funded from this annual saving, as summarised below:

	£
Staffing	145,000
Business rates contribution	5,326
New rental income	7,250
Gross Annual Saving	157,776
Less Annual Grant payable to CAHF	96,324
Annual Net Saving	61,452

In year one of the contract, the council will contribute an additional £2,500 to CAHF's one off recruitment costs, reducing the net year one saving to £58,952.

The annual net saving will be applied to existing budget pressures elsewhere in the directorate.

Implications completed by Kellie Gooch – Head of Finance (Environment), 13 February 2023.

Verified by Sukvinder Kalsi, Director of Finance, 17 February 2023.

Legal Implications

This report recommends entering into a contract with Citizens Advice Hammersmith and Fulham for the delivery of library services and to grant a lease to CAHF of 87/91 Askew Road, the premises from which the library services will be delivered by CAHF.

Authority to Enter into Contract

Library services are light touch under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (CPV 79995000). The value of the contract is below the threshold above which such light touch services are required to be advertised under the Regulations. Therefore, there are no particular advertising requirements under the Regulations. However, the Council's own Contract Standing Orders require that contracts of this value are advertised ('CSO 19.1') save where there is approval from the s151 officer on recommendation of the Contracts Assurance Board to waive the CSO. Such a waiver was granted on 22nd February 2023 on the ground that there is a lack of suitable alternative suppliers in the market.

The decision to enter into the contract is a Key Decision as it has a value of over £300,000 and the report must be submitted to Committee Services for publication on the Council's website. The appropriate decision maker is the SLT Member.

Angela Hogan, Chief Solicitor (Contracts and Procurement) 3rd January 2023

Authority to enter into Lease

Section 1(1) the Localism Act 2011 (The General Power of Competence) allows the Council to do anything which individuals generally do even if:

- It is unlike anything else the authority may do
- It is unlike anything that other public bodies may do
- It is carried out in any whatever, including:
 - o anywhere in the UK or elsewhere;
 - o for a commercial purpose or otherwise for a charge, or without charge; and
 - o for, or otherwise that for, the benefit of the Authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area

Rachel Silverstone, Senior Solicitor (Property and Planning) 24 February 2023

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

BACKGROUND

1. Askew Road Library is the smallest and least busy of the four libraries that are directly provided by the Council, with Hammersmith, Shepherds Bush and Fulham libraries being busier.
2. The Library at Askew Road has an area of 317.4m². In terms of usage, it has:
 - 3,000 books borrowed a month
 - 1,500 active Library members
 - 5,000 monthly visits
3. To ensure the long-term provision and improvement of Library services at Askew Road Library, and to deliver cost efficiencies, it is proposed to contract with Citizens Advice Hammersmith and Fulham (CAHF) for the delivery of services for the next 5 years. CAHF have been successfully providing the library service at Avonmore library and neighbourhood centre since 2012.

Citizens Advice experience of providing a library service at Avonmore Library

4. In 2011, rather than close Barons Court Library (now called Avonmore library and neighbourhood centre), it was agreed that the library would continue as a self-service library from 2012 managed by CAHF and run by CAHF volunteers. CAHF uses half of the upper ground floor to provide its principal advice and information services and the other half of the upper ground floor is used as a library as well as a CAHF waiting area. CAHF volunteers oversee the daily operations of the library element which include a self-serve design with 1 self-service terminal, a range of stock for all ages (but with a particular focus on children) and internet access. The opening hours of the library remained unchanged (9am–5pm Monday to Friday). This has meant that a wider range of community services have been available at the library site than were previously available.
5. Many elements of the previous library service have continued to be provided. For example, the library is part of the Council's wider network, with stock at Avonmore continuing to be included in the Council's catalogue. New stock continues to be purchased. Users are able to return books from other libraries to Avonmore and vice versa and books can be borrowed via self-service. There is space for users to read and study. Public access internet is also available, as is free wi-fi.

Proposal for the future provision of Askew Road Library

6. CAHF has a successful track record over the last ten years of providing Library Services at Avonmore and this report is proposing that the advantages offered by co-production be extended to Askew Road Library.
7. It is proposed that the lease term will be a Term of 5 years from completion expiring 31 March 2028, aligning it to the arrangement in place at Avonmore Library.

8. A peppercorn rent for the public library space is proposed. Rent for the office used exclusively by CAHF as a call centre is set at £7,250 per annum. Rent will be reviewed on 1 April 2025 to the greater of;
 - The annual rent payable immediately before the relevant review date;
 - 45% of the open market rent, to be determined by a surveyor (independent valuer) acting as an expert and not as an arbitrator.
9. There will be a break clause: The landlord or the tenant may terminate the lease at any time serving on the other party no less than 6 months prior written notice.
10. Repairs and maintenance: The Landlord will be responsible for repairs to the boiler and maintenance of windows. The Landlord shall be responsible for cleaning, heating, and lighting the whole premises and the tenant shall reimburse for the cost of cleaning, heating, and lighting the Call Centre, based on a percentage of the cost calculated on floor area, which is 14.8% of the whole demise.
11. The full details of the Heads of Terms for lease are included in Appendix 1.
12. Arrangements for existing staff:
 - Management is of the view that TUPE does not apply in view of the existing staff are not site specific and are employed on temporary contracts or will be filling vacancies at other H&F libraries. In addition, CAHF will run the Askew library on a different operating model, offering volunteer placements managed by a Volunteers Supervisor.
13. Proposed staffing under the new arrangement with CAHF:
 - It is proposed to employ 2 full time staff, consisting of 1 supervisor and 1 Library Co-ordinator. The Supervisor will be responsible for recruiting, training, and supervising the volunteers and the Library Coordinator would be responsible for coordinating library activities, including digital skills and working with volunteers on the delivery of the services.
14. H&F will make a direct contract payment to CAHF for the service. This will ensure that there are full costs for delivering the library service, including oversight of volunteers, training and development, oversight of compliance with Health and Safety, GDPR, Safeguarding, & reporting. Detail of the Service Level Agreement are included in Appendix 2

Actions to be undertaken to enable a seamless handover

15. Subject to approval of this report the following actions will be undertaken to ensure the smooth transition of the management of Askew Road Library:
 - Agreement of Service Level Agreement – February 2023
 - Agreement of Heads of Terms and Conditions – February 2023
 - Communications to the community and stakeholders of the planned transfer of Askew library to Citizens Advice – February 2023
 - Recruitment of the paid 2 x 1 FTE staff, the Library Supervisor, and the Co-ordinator – February 2023

- H&F Library Services to provide training on library functions – February 2023
- Recruitment of volunteers - March 2023
- H&F working alongside and training of volunteers - April to June 2023

Reasons for Decision

16. To support co-production with the community and to expand the range of service available at Askew Road on a more cost effective basis for the Council and the rate payer. it is recommended to proceed with the proposals for CAHF to provide Library Services at Askew Road.

Equality Implications

17. As the change of management does not impact on the provision of the service there are no equality implications.

Risk Management Implications

18. The report recommends extending the existing arrangement with CAHF at Askew Road Library to expand the range of services available at Askew Road on a more cost effective basis. This is in line with the objective of being ruthlessly financially efficient.

Comments provided by David Hughes, Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance, 20 February 2023

Procurement implications

19. Not applicable as covered in Legal comments

Comments provided by Waheeda Soomro, Commercial Manager, Procurement and Commercial, 20 February 2023

Local Economy and Social Value Implications

In the council's Social Value policy, it is a requirement that all contracts awarded by the council with a value above £100,000 provide social value commitments that are additional to the core services required under the contract. These commitments must amount to at least 10% in value of the price of the contract proposed based on the council's social value "TOMs".

There is no reference to the council's Social Value policy in this report including in paragraph 20 below.

Implications completed by Paul Clarke, Social Value Officer, 21 February 2023

Local Economy and Social Value

20. By co-producing the delivery of Library service with CAHF, these proposals will contribute to the principles of Hammersmith & Fulham's Social Value Strategy:

Local Economy

- It will provide an opportunity for local people, alongside non-residents, to apply to the two professional 1.0 FTE roles that CAHF will be recruiting to.
- Dependent on if the successful candidates are H&F residents, and if they meet any of the following criteria, this offers the potential to be a Social Value contribution.
 - I. *No. of local direct employees (FTE) hired on contract for one year or the whole duration of the contract, whichever is shorter.*
 - II. *No. of employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are long term unemployed (unemployed for a year or longer) as a result of a recruitment programme.*
 - III. *No. of employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEETs) as a result of a recruitment programme.*
 - IV. *No. of 18+ y.o. employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are rehabilitating or ex offenders as a result of a recruitment programme.*
 - V. *No. of disabled employees (FTE) hired on the contract as a result of a recruitment programme.*
- This proposal offers value for money by achieving a saving of £61,452 from the proposed partnership with CAHF which will have reduced staff costs, reduced business rates, and new rental income opportunities for the office used exclusively by them as a call centre, compared to the current delivery of the library service at Askew Road.

Local Communities

- It will help grow the third sector by increasing the contribution CAHF make to the delivery of services to the community. It will also provide opportunities for members of the local community to volunteer to assist with the delivery of library services for the benefit of the community.
- Innovative Service Delivery: working with CAHF will provide opportunities for greater collaborative work and delivery of services and activities between the Library Service and CAHF that can benefit communities at all H&F libraries.

Consultation

21. It is proposed that as the service to residents will remain unchanged, that a communication plan to engage with the local community, ward councillors, staff and unions is undertaken throughout February 2023.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Heads of Terms