

Selection and Evaluation Process

The council is seeking to release libraries to the community sector via two business models.

Community Managed - A community organisation to operate the library based upon a pepper corn rent basis.

Community Delivered – Staffordshire County Council retain responsibility for the property. The service is managed by a paid member of Staffordshire County Council staff covering a “cluster” of similar libraries. Day to day operations will be undertaken by volunteers.

The council will adopt the Community Managed model as the primary approach with the Community Delivered model as secondary.

To reach the council’s objective for the Community Managed business model, there needs to be a supporting procurement process to identify the best fit community organisation for the sites where there is more than one interested party and to ensure suitable fit where there is a lone interested party.

It is understood that there is currently no financial exchange for services from the council to the successful party and therefore the procurement process is not bound by the EU Public Contract Regulations (PCR) or Staffordshire County Council Procurement Regulations.

The council has created a primary procurement approach for the Community Managed model which consists of placing a Public Advert to notify interested parties, followed by the release of a suite of procurement documents specific to each site. Within the documentation an evaluation process will be conducted on a question and answer format and or a case study basis with declared weightings.

A council evaluation team will evaluate and score the received submissions with the highest scoring interested party being awarded the library contract. Unsuccessful parties will be provided with a full debrief on their submission. The evaluation process may accommodate presentation/interview sessions if required. The process will also allow for non award if low scoring or unsuitable bids are received

This primary procurement approach will be applied to all sites, however should there be lack of interest in any of the sites from community organisations, the council will progress with transferring these sites to the Community Delivered model. No formal procurement process will be required for this secondary approach as management remains with the council. The council will however, will need to ensure that volunteers are recruited of the right calibre and in sufficient numbers.

The original release concept of 23 libraries to be based upon the Community Managed model has been reshaped by the influence and impact of the recent Public and Collective Staff Consultation. Current understanding, based upon feedback is that there is a strong likelihood that some communities will adopt the Community Managed model at this stage, with the remainder taking the Community Delivered approach. However, work will continue to increase the number of potential Community Managed libraries prior to the Public Advert.

As the intention is that there would be no financial exchange for a service from the council to the successful party the procurement process is not bound by the EU Public Contract Regulations (PCR) or Staffordshire County Council Procurement Regulations.

Research has explored the remit of PCR Concession Contract and there is a view that the scope of work may fall under this scope. A Concession Contract is exempt from the EU Public Contract Regulations.

Other Local Authorities have already progressed with similar projects (i.e. Warrington, Camden, Buckinghamshire, North Yorkshire) using an evaluation process. Suffolk however, outsourced to a private company via the EU Competitive Dialogue procurement process.

2.0 PROCUREMENT PROCESS

2.1 Primary Approach

The primary approach is to explore the Community Managed model. For all sites, the following this approach will be adopted in the first instance on an individual library site basis.

For each site the council will create a suite of procurement documents which shall include an evaluation section consisting of elements derived from the 4 key Critical Success Factors (as per the 2014 Public Consultation Process), plus relevant elements of the standard Staffordshire County Council Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) as used by Staffordshire Procurement. The shape of the evaluation section may be based upon a question and answer section and or a case study.

Declared weightings for the section will be included within the documentation plus if appropriate Pass or Fail questions to assist the assessment of the potential organisations.

A Public Advert will be released into the market place via the council's website to alert interested parties to the opportunities and to commence the formal process for each library site.

Interested parties will be able to access the procurement documents via the council's e tendering system for review, and if appropriate provide a written response against a return deadline date.

A council evaluation team will evaluate and score the received submissions with the highest scoring interested party being awarded the library contract. Unsuccessful parties will be provided with a full debrief on their submission. The evaluation process may accommodate presentation/interview sessions if required. The process will allow for non award if low scoring or unsuitable bids are received.

Each library will be treated as an individual procurement process to accommodate any site specific requirements as raised in feedback from the Public Consultation process and council property leasing agreement.

The Community Right to Challenge process can be accommodated into the above approach, should this be required. This will include the following stages pre procurement documentation.

Formal request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) to include key information including and not limited to consortiums and subcontractors, financial resources, nature of community legal status, social values, etc.

The EOIs are to be assessed within a declared timescale and if applicable to be rejected, request for modification and or accepted. The formal procurement process will then commence as above, but with the removal of standard elements of the PQQ documentation.

2.2 Secondary Approach

It is currently understood that there are likely to be a small proportion of sites that could be Community Managed initially and therefore a secondary approach may be required for the Community Delivered model.

No formal procurement process will be required for this secondary approach as ownership remains with the council. A selection/recruitment process will be required for the volunteers.

3.0 TIMETABLE

It is anticipated that the initial Community Managed sites will be progressed first, with an agreed timetable to follow for the remaining sites.