

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside
Date:	25 September 2013
Title:	Leasing Space in Hampshire's Libraries
Reference:	5115
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to receive in principle approval to market surplus space in Hampshire's public libraries in order to generate income, achieve cost savings and enhance operational benefits and synergies (where possible) for the Service, thereby contributing towards asset-backed opportunities as part of Transformation to 2015.
- 1.2. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside confirms his support for implementation of the initiative to make surplus space available in Hampshire public libraries for community and commercial use. The final decision will be made by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources on 1 November 2013.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Many of the reference books in public libraries have now become subscription sites available on the internet and are no longer published in book format. Hampshire's Library and Information Service (LIS) has embraced this change and now offers a range of services on-line available free via membership of the Library Service. In addition to this, by the end of August 2013 all Hampshire's libraries will be offering free Wi-Fi for customers with their own laptops too, as well as free public access to the internet via over 400 terminals in libraries.
- 2.2. As a consequence of this, there has been a reduction in the number of physical books in libraries and therefore there is space that can be made available in some libraries which the County Council owns or occupies on long leases.

- 2.3. The County Council's 'Transformation to 2015' programme promotes better use of the Council's land and buildings in order to achieve efficiencies, cost savings, operational benefits and generate additional income. It is considered that surplus space within libraries could be put to more productive use by marketing it for occupation by community and commercial organisations, with the aim of achieving the following benefits to the Council:
- increasing revenue to the service;
 - reducing costs to the service;
 - promoting co-location with community and commercial entities;
 - fostering operational synergies (where applicable); and
 - encouraging additional use of libraries, particularly in cases where surplus space is let to community organisations whose customer base has similar characteristics and/or needs to those of LIS.
- 2.4 The Service is seeking support for making surplus space available in Hampshire public libraries for community and commercial use, which would be administered via three methods:
- a) Via daily room hire, on a non-exclusive basis (to a maximum of three months in any continuous period), which is an existing arrangement that would be continued.
 - b) Via a specially prepared "licence to occupy", on a non-exclusive basis, on terms and for periods which are appropriate to the availability of space and flexible to suit both parties.
 - c) Via a commercial leases on terms and for periods which are appropriate to the availability of space and flexible to suit both parties.
- 2.5 The day rate for daily room hire would be at pre-determined standard charges, which already exist and currently take the form of either a community rate or a commercial rate.
- 2.6 The rate for a "licence to occupy" and the commercial leases would be negotiated by Property Services on a case-by-case basis, taking into account any relevant market factors and/or operational benefits to be achieved on behalf of LIS.
- 2.7 The Service would like to develop new spaces in libraries both as flexible spaces (enabling a range of activities) and, as "hot offices" hireable using the day rate and available for individuals and/or businesses which carry out the majority of their work via the internet, needing an office only occasionally.
- 2.8 This project is anticipated to generate income and/or reduce costs for the service, net of costs incurred for creating useable space, managing the space and security to the premises.

- 2.9 Although there are 53 Libraries in Hampshire ranging from Discovery Centres to small neighbourhood libraries, not all libraries will be capable of creating surplus space for use. However, demand for use of space in libraries has been identified in a number of areas. As such it is anticipated that opportunities could exist elsewhere across Hampshire where surplus space is available.

3. Finance

- 3.1 It is difficult to anticipate the extent of income or cost savings which could be generated by this initiative, since this is dependent upon opportunities which exist for occupation of space and the terms negotiated on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.2 During 2012/2013, LIS generated a total income of about £100,000 from hiring out rooms within Hampshire's libraries using existing room hire rates. Additionally, a small number of existing formal lettings to external bodies generated rental income of about £50,000 over the same period. The combined income exceeded LIS's target for that period and indicates the potential for attracting additional income for the Service, with the biggest increase expected to come from more formal lettings (i.e. on the basis of licence or lease).
- 3.3 Inevitably, costs are likely to be incurred in many cases to create and manage available space. Therefore, any additional income and/or costs savings will only be realised once associated costs to create/manage the space have been recovered.

4. Performance

- 4.1. One of the key performance measures of LIS is the number of visits. This initiative is likely to enable the Service to improve on this target, particularly where a community body is in occupation of space and customers/end users share similar needs and characteristics.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside confirms his support for implementation of the initiative to make surplus space available in Hampshire's libraries for community and commercial use. The final decision will be made by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources on 1 November 2013.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 Opening up the spaces in the libraries increases the opportunities for the community to make use of the building and for members of the community to use the facilities for longer.

2 Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1 No impact on Crime and Disorder has been identified.

3 Climate Change:

- 3.1 How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No impact identified.

- 3.2 How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No impact identified.