

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FOR PARTIES INTERESTED IN SUBMITTING AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF CHURCH STRETTON LIBRARY SERVICE, UNDER THE COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE LEGISLATION

Service information – Church Stretton Library

Library Service overview

The overall vision for Shropshire Libraries is to provide and support inspiring library services for learning, information and enjoyment.

A core set of three **principles** will underpin the delivery of public library services:

- The provision of information and reading will remain fundamental to public library provision, but will take account of the shifts in society and the opportunities provided by technological developments;
- The importance of libraries as a community spaces, as a hub for people, for creativity, for the delivery of other services and for providing support to local communities and people;
- Empowering communities, providing leadership, opportunities to engage and support to local people, seeing them as co-creators and co-producers of libraries and the services delivered within them.

In taking forward our vision for a library service a number of **aims** respond to anticipated present and future library service needs:

- Provide everyone in Shropshire with access to library services
- Put customers at the heart of everything we do
- Encourage and enable access to informal learning
- Promote literacy and inspire reading
- Provide activities and information that improve health and well-being
- Provide opportunities for job creation and business development
- Provide welcoming community spaces that are open to all
- Enable access to digital information and services
- Build partnerships that place libraries at the heart of communities
- Deliver and develop targeted services for those in most need
- Provide services and activities to support children, young people and families
- Develop innovative services that reflect the changing roles of libraries

Details of current provision

Since April 2016 the Visitor Information Centre functions have temporarily been integrated into the library space and are now delivered by library staff as a combined service. Between April to June 2016 this has contributed to a rise in visits of approximately 2000. Please note that expressions of interest are being sought for the library service only and responses do not necessarily need to include the Visitor Information Centre functions.

Current opening hours

Monday Closed

Tuesday 9.30 to 7.30

Wednesday Closed

Thursday 9.30 to 5

Friday 9.30 to 5

Saturday 9.30 to 5

Total 32.5 hours per week. Opening times at other libraries have recently been subject to public consultation and proposals were made to reduce opening times during the periods of lowest use. These were generally identified as evenings and Saturday afternoons. Church Stretton Library was not included in this review.

Staffing

The library is staffed by 1 Branch Manager and 2 Library Assistants (total 38.5hrs), plus 2 Casual Library Assistants providing regular additional cover.

Occasional staff cover is also currently provided by library staff from Shrewsbury Library. The library is also supported by Team Librarians based at Shrewsbury Library, the Library Support team based in Shrewsbury, the Central Area admin officer, and the Central Area Library Manager.

It should be noted that the staffing budget detailed within this document does not provide sufficient staffing to cover the existing opening times of the library. Additional staffing of approx. £11,000 is provided from other library area budgets.

In addition there are approximately 12 Home Library Service volunteers who select and deliver books to readers who could not visit the library themselves due to disability or mobility issues, illness, or care commitments. There is also a small team of Local History volunteers who offer advice on local/family history research, as well as a volunteer who assists with shelving duties in the library.

IT Facilities

- 5 public computers with internet access and printing facility.
- Free wi-fi throughout the library.
- 1 photocopier for public use.
- 1 document scanner for public use.

Library stock

The library stocks about 13,000 items representing the full range of borrowable material, including fiction and non-fiction books for all ages, DVDs, talking books on CD and large print books. The library also includes a Health Zone featuring stock and other information resources related to health and well-being. Alterations to the layout of the children's area have resulted in easier access to junior stock and a better space for events.

The library is included in countywide stock rotation systems meaning that a large proportion of the stock will move around from branch to branch. People can also request items held in other branches within the county, which are then despatched to the branch via our library vans. The library also holds a Local History collection of reference and lending material which is available for general use and supports the work of the Local History volunteers.

Events

- Time to Listen – storytime for adults held monthly
- Rhyme time – stories, rhymes and songs for children held monthly.
- Reading Group – meet in the library monthly. There are 10 other local reading groups who access their books via Church Stretton library.
- Local History Advice – drop-in sessions run by the volunteers on a weekly basis. The library is a designated Local History Centre, set up in conjunction with Shropshire Archives.
- Author events – with a wide range of different authors, these events have grown in popularity over the past 2 years.

In addition Church Stretton Library engages with countywide/national projects and initiatives such as the Summer Reading Challenge, National Poetry Day and Dementia Awareness Week.

Statistical summary

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Visits	46,865	38,663	36,588	38,674	35,487
Active Users	1,769	1,705	1,642	1,532	1,488
Computer Time Used (mins)	262,280	248,831	235,457	232,742	230,382
Total Loans	54,773	52,098	50,372	44,067	38,339
Requests	2,711	2,471	2,116	1,882	2,132
Event Attendance	678	499	616	946	1296
Volunteer Hours	342	562	677	668	941

	% change over 5yrs	% change from 14/15 to 15/16
Visits	-24%	-8%
Active Users	-16%	-3%
Computer Time Used (mins)	-12%	-1%
Total Loans	-30%	-13%
Requests	-21%	13%
Event Attendance	91%	37%
Volunteer Hours	175%	41%

Future provision

Any future vision for the library should build on the work that is already being done to ensure the library remains a key part of the community in Church Stretton. This would include strengthening links with all key partners within the town in a collaborative way, working towards local priorities and interests as well as wider library service aims.

The best solution would be based on Church Stretton library remaining within the overall Shropshire Libraries network, with ongoing support from Shropshire Council in the form of library IT systems, stock and professional librarian input. This would maintain the firm foundation for a quality service that meets the needs of all.

Like most other libraries, Church Stretton is facing challenges to many of its traditional functions. Future provision would recognise this and look to take advantage of the many new opportunities that are arising. This would include digital opportunities – promoting locally the expanding range of library e-services, making creative use of free Wi-Fi, tapping in to the growing demand for digital activities and events such as Code Clubs. There are also opportunities related to the growing role of libraries as a source of information and activity related to Health and Well-being. National funding for libraries from Arts Council England also presents new opportunities for creative arts projects and partnerships, to add to the already vibrant cultural offer that is driven by the library.

Financial information

Running costs

The running costs for the library total approximately £47,500 per year (this includes additional overtime / temporary hours to cover the core library and VIC opening times). A more detailed breakdown is available on request.

Funding available

Shropshire Council's maximum available contribution for the operation of a library service in Church Stretton is outlined below.

Year	Amount
2017/18	£36,090*
2018/19	£18,045
2019/20	£0

*NB this figure is for a full financial year and will be amended accordingly on a pro rata basis depending on any contract start date.

For any further details, in order to visit the site or clarification of the process, please contact Rawden Parslow on 07990085404 or rawden.parslow@shropshire.gov.uk

NOTICE OF THE OPENING OF A 18 WEEK WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF CHURCH STRETTON LIBRARY SERVICE, UNDER THE COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE LEGISLATION

Introduction

This process is to allow an opportunity for expressions of interests to be made under the Community Right to Challenge legislation **and is not the commencement of a procurement process**. This notice seeks information regarding the potential interest in delivering the library service in Church Stretton, which may include the management of the existing library building on behalf of Shropshire Council.

Background

Shropshire Council is transforming and redesigning itself and the services that it commissions and delivers so that as soon as possible, everything is as efficient as it can be, with a focus on the customer, prevention and partnership

The Council is projected to have a significant and impactful funding shortfall by 2018/19, resulting in discretionary services such as leisure, libraries, museums, public open spaces and support for youth activities facing significant cutbacks or in the worst case scenario – cessation of funding and closure.

The adoption of a locality approach to commissioning is a key strand of Shropshire Council's commissioning strategy; engagement with the voluntary sector, town and parish councils and community groups to support the local delivery of a range of services and activities - such as libraries, customer service points, youth activities, amenity spaces and environmental maintenance - has already been successful in a number of areas.

To help secure a sustainable future for these services Shropshire Council wants to work with town and parish councils and other partners such as community groups, the voluntary and community sector, the education sector and the business sector to develop new service delivery models and funding streams for local services and assets. This could include the transfer of assets and services from Shropshire Council to other organisations, new partnership arrangements that are able to secure new funding streams for local services or the generation of additional income by local councils to support service delivery.

We want Shropshire's communities to be resilient, to take ownership of issues that are important to them and, with the Council's support, to develop their own resources to be able to flourish into the future.

Church Stretton library service is a trusted resource that can be maximised to achieve important strategic and local outcomes. Specifically, our vision for the delivery of library services in Shropshire is to provide and support inspiring library services for learning, information and enjoyment with the delivery of the library service impacting positively on the lives of people. Reading and the provision of information will remain fundamental to public library provision, but the shifts in society and the opportunities provided by technological developments will be taken into account.

Seeking Interest

The Council is committed to and is being proactive in seeking alternative management and delivery arrangements for Church Stretton library service through the Community Right to Challenge process.

The Community Right to Challenge gives groups of citizens, community groups, parish councils and our employees the right to submit expressions of interest in taking over and running a Council service.

Groups are able to express an interest to us in which they must explain how they intend to run the service in a more efficient way. The Council must then consider and respond by either accepting the suggestions, rejecting in certain defined circumstances, or suggest modifications and improvements to the proposals.

Interested parties should note that it is considered that the Employee 'Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations '2006 ('TUPE') would apply to any contract awarded under any subsequent procurement process.

To Respond

If you are interested in expressing an interest you should respond using the Community Right to Challenge Expression of Interest form, which can be found at <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/doing-business-with-shropshire-council/community-right-to-challenge/>

Details about how Church Stretton library service is currently delivered, copies of the premises layout and other details of the building, future estimated budgets for the delivery of the service and other details will be made available on request.

No interested party should make contact with the services or attempt to visit the premises without prior agreement.

For any further details, in order to visit the site or clarification of the process, please contact Rawden Parslow on 07990085404 or rawden.parslow@shropshire.gov.uk

Expressions of interest using the Community Right to Challenge form should be sent in no later than noon on Monday 16th January 2017.

Confirmation of receipt will be made within 2 days and the final decision on any Expression of Interest will be communicated within 30 days after the deadline for submission.

Confidentiality

Please note all information included in this process will be confidential and only for the recipient's knowledge. No information in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party without prior written authorisation.

The Community Right to Challenge process

Once we've received any Expressions of Interest we'll check to make sure they are valid and comply with the requirements of the legislation. If it is valid and compliant we'll consider it before it is submitted to our Cabinet in the month following the deadline. The Council's Cabinet will be the final decision maker on its acceptance.

If an Expression of Interest doesn't have adequate information or appears to be inaccurate we will ask for further clarification. We will not reject an expression of interest because the information is inadequate without asking for further information first.

If we consider any Expression(s) of Interest valid, we will then run a procurement process in which organisations – including those that submitted an expression of interest but also other organisations and private companies - can bid to take over the running of the service.

Disclaimer

The information in this document is solely for the purpose of enabling expressions of interest to be created and submitted and no representation, warranty, or undertaking is given by the Council as to its accuracy or completeness, and the Council accepts no liability in relation to it.

The Council reserves the right, at its discretion:

- (1) to vary the procedure for this process;
- (2) to proceed or not with a subsequent procurement process.

No expense in responding to this notice will be reimbursed by the Council