

**Executive Member for Leisure & Culture and Advisory Panel** 27 March 2007

Report of the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning & Culture)

**TANG HALL LIBRARY: BIG LOTTERY BID**

**Summary**

1. This report seeks approval to submit a bid to the Community Library strand of the Big Lottery Fund in order to refurbish and extend Tang Hall library and deliver a library learning centre.

**Background**

2. The Big Lottery Fund has recognised that libraries have an important role in the community and want to use their funding to strengthen their relationship with them. They want to fund libraries that are more than traditional library services and that work with their communities to:
  - invigorate libraries as centres of wider community learning and development and learning based activities
  - create, improve and develop library spaces that meet the needs of the whole community
  - be innovative and promote good practice in the ways libraries are designed and run
  - work with disadvantaged groups, existing users and non-users, voluntary and community groups and other community service providers
3. The Big Lottery Fund wishes to fund project that will achieve this by creating library spaces that are exciting and accessible to all. This could include reading groups, writing groups, language classes, family learning activities, art and museum exhibitions, cultural activities such as drama, health activities such as well-being classes, information seminars about local volunteering or other opportunities.
4. The application process is competitive, open to all local authority library services in England, who are limited to a maximum of one application. First stage applications have to be in by 30 March after which successful applicants are required to submit a business plan, a community engagement plan, and a capital project plan. Decisions are fed back by the Big Lottery Fund in September.
5. Over the past 18 months the Library Service and Adult and Community Education Service have been working on the concept of the creation of Library Learning Centres. The vision for these centres, captured in the accompanying paper in Annex A, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Libraries, builds on the concepts established by the Local Strategic Partnership, in their ambition to

have learning at the heart of local communities. Library Learning Centres build on the current model of an ICT suite in a library building placing learning as the central activity with the building. This strategic priority fits well with the Big Lottery Fund criteria.

6. Acomb will be the first new Library Learning Centre, due to open in February 2008 funded by the Learning and Skills Council with a capital contribution from the Council. Tang Hall has been identified, through the asset management plan, as the next priority for upgrading because it is the third busiest library, falls in area of relative deprivation, and has an existing ICT suite.

### **The Scheme**

7. The proposal for the Tang Hall bid is a scheme at ground floor level which will increase the overall floor area of the library by one third, creating three learning rooms and a café as well as redesigning the interior of the library. The ICT suite will be relocated to make it more accessible. This will create a modern learning centre able to offer an extended range of learning activities and suited to many styles: Formal, informal, flexible, blended, etc. Many more people will be able to use the library for a wider range of activities for example individual flexible learning, skills for life courses, family learning activities, targeted activities for young people, local history events, and other activities as directed by the local community.

### **Consultation**

8. Consultation exercises related to the area asset management plan and the establishment of the integrated children's centre has established that the community wish to see the library remain in its current location and has indicated the kind of additional activities that the community wants to see provided, e.g. messy play! The bid will reflect these ideas.
9. A steering group will now be established to shape the development and delivery of the project including the community engagement plan. Invitations to join the group will be issued to a wide range of stakeholders including for example, local residents' groups, young people, the Police, youth services, Future Prospects, local members. Suggestions for membership are welcome.

### **Options**

10. The main options are:
  - a) to submit a bid to the Big Lottery to improve the existing building
  - b) not to submit a bid but to look instead for alternative ways to provide a new library building in the future perhaps through developments associated with Metcalfe Lane or any future plans for Tang Hall School

### **Analysis**

11. Option a) is recommended as there are a number of drawbacks with option b):
  - A new build will be much more expensive than adapting the current building and the opportunity to attract grant funding will have been lost
  - There is considerable uncertainty about what opportunities will be available in the future which will inevitably lead to delay in making any progress

- The community have expressed a preference for the library to stay where it is
12. This represents an excellent opportunity to further an identified strategic priority of the Library Service in partnership with Adult and Community Education. As well as the possibility of capital funding it provides an opportunity to bid for revenue funding to employ a community development worker and a volunteer coordinator. These would be instrumental in identifying the needs of the community and turning them into action, as well creating a model of community engagement that could trial new forms of governance such as a community management board in order to involve the community in the development and management of the library services. Such a pilot would inform thinking across the service.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial:**

13. The Tang Hall bid is for around £800k. Of this 25% may be used for revenue. There is no requirement for matched funding (for bids under £1.5m).
14. Any revenue implications will be contained within existing budgets. The only increased costs will arise from running costs associated with the increased floor area of the building although these will partially be offset by the improved energy efficiency of the new building. It is also anticipated that the new facility will generate some additional income.

#### **Human Resources (HR):**

15. There are no direct implications for HR arising from this report.

#### **Equalities:**

16. This project will make a significant impact in terms of widening access to and participation in the Library Service.

#### **Legal:**

17. There are no legal implications. The Council owns the freehold of the building.

#### **Crime and Disorder:**

18. The project will help the Council to meet the identified objective within the community safety plan of reducing anti-social behaviour.

#### **Information Technology (IT):**

19. There are no implications.

#### **Property:**

20. Planning permission has been obtained for the scheme. The project fits with the service asset management plan.

#### **Other:**

21. There are no implications.

## Corporate Priorities

22. The project will deliver on a number of corporate priorities in the LAA and the Corporate Strategic Priorities. It will also enable it to better meet the five Lifelong Learning and Culture priorities:
- Making York more eventful
  - Engaging in learning
  - Being healthy
  - Building, stronger, safer and greener communities
  - A vibrant cultural infrastructure

## Risk Management

23. If we do not refurbish the library and provide the facilities that the community wants the service is likely to decline and suffer the effects of disengagement by the community, e.g. vandalism. If the bid is successful management resources would need to be committed to manage the project, to facilitate the steering committee and to meet community expectations.

## Recommendations

24. The Executive Member is asked to approve the submission of a bid to the Community Library strand of the Big Lottery Fund.

Reason: To refurbish and extend Tang Hall library and deliver a library learning centre.

## Contact Details

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### Chief Officer responsible for the report:

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Report Approved



Date 12.3.07.

Charlie Croft  
Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning & Culture)

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

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Wards Affected: Heworth, Hull Road and Osbaldwick

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

## Annexes

- A. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Libraries

## **Background Papers**

Big Lottery programme file held by Head of Libraries and Heritage.

Reports/emap/tang hall.doc