

**CABINET
7 JANUARY 2020**

CAPITAL WORKS REQUIRED AT CROWN STREET LIBRARY

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Heather Scott,
Leader and Local Services Portfolio**

**Responsible Director -
Ian Williams, Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for Members to release the capital allocation included in the Capital Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 for the refurbishment of Crown Street Library and to consider the proposal to increase revenue for the Library service subject to the outcome of the MTFP.

Summary

2. There has been a significant amount of consultation and a number of reports presented to Cabinet in recent years with regard to Crown Street Library and the wider Library service. This report presents a proposal to refurbish Crown Street Library alongside replacing the roof, mechanical and electrical installations and the required structural repairs, and highlights the additional revenue resources required.
3. The proposals take on board comments received from previous consultations and the latest conversation held in February/March 2019. The new refurbishment work will be carried out sympathetically to reflect the historic nature of the building.
4. In addition, there is a proposal within the MTFP 2020/21 to 2023/24 to increase the revenue allocation by £180,000 per annum to maintain adequate staff and to restore the book fund to previous levels.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that;
 - (a) Subject to Council confirming the allocation of £2.9million for the refurbishment of Crown Street Library in the Capital Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24, Cabinet approve the release of these funds.
 - (b) That the procurement be designated strategic and delegated to the Council Procurement Board, chaired by the Managing Director, with updates on contract awards reported to members in the Procurement Annual Pan Report.

Reasons

6. The recommendation is supported to enable the refurbishment and restoration of Crown Street Library.

Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Background Papers

Previous Cabinet Reports:

1. Library Service Update (11 September 2018)
2. Library Service (17 January 2017)
3. MTFP Library Services Proposals (22 June 2016)

Ian Thompson : Extension 6612
 CD

S17 Crime and Disorder	The content of this report does not impact on crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	The Library service does have an impact on the health and well-being of the people who use the service.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There will be a positive impact on carbon emissions as a result of upgrading the mechanical and electrical installations.
Diversity	There is no impact on any particular individual as a result of this report.
Wards Affected	The Library is located in Park East Ward, however residents from across the Borough use the facilities.
Groups Affected	There will be no impact on any individual group as a result of this report.
Budget and Policy Framework	There will be no impact on the Budget or Policy Framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Library service does impact on a number of priorities within One Darlington Perfectly Placed.
Efficiency	The refurbishment of the Library does not impact on the Council's efficiency agenda.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. Cabinet have previously considered a number of reports with regard to the Library service, the last one being 11 September 2018 where Members decided to retain the central library service at Crown Street. Part of the report discussed the potential financial implications with regard to the capital development, suggesting an investment of £2million would be required. However, at the time of the report detailed work and design had not taken place therefore this was a preliminary indication of the potential cost. Subsequent detailed studies and design has taken place.
8. It was also agreed that further consultation would take place with residents with regard to the Library service, which was carried out during February and March 2019. Further details are included in this report.
9. At Cabinet in October this year, Members approved appointing a number of independent trustees as well as setting up a Library Service Consultative Group. Work is underway on appointing the trustees and the initial Library Consultative Group is set up for Wednesday 22 January 2020 at 4pm where the proposals for the redevelopment of Crown Street Library can be discussed.

Proposal

10. Any works carried out to Crown Street Library will need to address the long-term issues with regard to the roof, structural, mechanical and electrical, as well as a sympathetic refurbishment of the building alongside improving access. The proposed design has also taken on board the outcome of various consultations over the last few years and therefore very few changes are being proposed structurally to the overall layout of the building.
11. The key to increasing footfall, moving forward, is to:
 - (a) Deliver a strong events and activity programme
 - (b) Refresh and improve the offer for children
 - (c) Improve the offer for teenagers
 - (d) Improve the overall ICT infrastructure within the building
 - (e) Retain and improve Local Studies
 - (f) Respect the heritage of the building
 - (g) Improve the toilet facilities
12. The proposed design includes the following key elements:
 - (a) The existing entrance from Crown Street will be adapted to make it accessible for all customers, introducing a lift as well as retaining the existing lift at the corner of Crown Street/Priestgate.
 - (b) The overall layout of the Library will generally be retained in its current form, retaining the Art Gallery, Local Studies, Children's Area, Learning Area, Study/Reference and Lending.

- (c) ICT equipment and plug-in points will be available throughout the Library, not just in the Learning Area.
 - (d) The existing reception desk will be removed, self-service points located at various locations as well as information hubs. Customers who require assistance with borrowing books or general information/advice will still be able to get this from Library staff.
 - (e) New toilets and family changing will be introduced into the space behind where the existing reception desk is located.
 - (f) Where appropriate the existing furniture will be retained, maintaining the authentic feel to the building.
 - (g) The refurbishment/redecoration would be sympathetic to the historic nature of the building.
 - (h) However, the Children's Area will be bright and vibrant, appropriate to the audience.
 - (i) Interpretation will be introduced, telling the story of Crown Street Library.
13. Attached at **Appendix 1** is the proposed layout for Crown Street Library. Attached at **Appendix 2** is the mood board presentation and the potential options for the appearance and feel of the refurbished Crown Street building.
14. A significant proportion of the allocated funds will be required to address the ongoing issues with the building with regard to re-roofing, carrying out structural repairs, and provision of new mechanical and electrical equipment throughout. There will be minimal work carried out in the basement, however where appropriate, redecoration will take place.
15. Throughout the latest conversation and previous consultation, there has been a number of comments with regard to providing a café within the Library that would help generate income to offset the deficit. It is not believed by officers that there will be adequate turnover to generate a surplus and the likely outcome is that a café facility would add an additional financial burden on the Library service. It is therefore not proposed to include a café facility within the Library, however a refreshment service through appropriate vending machines will be provided.
16. The level of work required will undoubtedly have significant operational issues for the service, as it will not be possible to undertake the work whilst having a fully operational library, so there will be a need for service reductions during the building works. The building works will be phased with parts of the building being closed off to the public at times and, if required, any full closures will be kept to an absolute minimum. The detail of the phasing plan is currently being finalised.

Timescale

17. Subject to Cabinet approval to release the funding, it is anticipated that the timetable will be as follows over a 14-month period:

Planning	January to April 2020
Roof replacement	Spring/Summer 2020
Internal Works	Autumn/Winter 2020

Conversation about the Future of the Library Service at Crown Street

18. There were 262 responses to the conversation about the future of the Library service at Crown Street, which ran from February to March 2019. In addition, two focus groups were held with groups of children and young people to ascertain their views about the Library service. Attached at **Appendix 3** is the analysis.
19. Two key questions were asked:
- (a) What would you like to see provided as part of the Library service in the Central Library and elsewhere in the Borough?
 - (b) Is there anything you wouldn't want to see provided as part of the Library service in the Central Library and elsewhere in the Borough?
20. There was strong support for activities and events for both children and adults, various comments with regard to the refurbishment of the building, as well as a range of other comments about the building and service. In preparing the proposed design for Crown Street Library, the outcome of the conversation and previous consultations that have taken place have been taken on board. However, it is impossible to reflect everyone's views as there are a number that conflict.
21. It is believed that the proposals put forward for the building will provide the best opportunity to address the majority of residents' concerns and desires for the service therefore enabling the Library team to increase footfall and use of Crown Street and the wider Library service.

Financial Implications Capital

22. The capital cost for the proposed scheme is £2.9 million. This has increased since the figure quoted in the January 2018 report as at that time, as mentioned earlier, detailed studies and design had not taken place. In addition, it is not anticipated that work will commence until Quarter 2 of 2020, therefore there is also an inflationary impact on the budget.
23. The estimated breakdown of the £2.9million capital allocation is as follows:

	£
Refurbishment works including asbestos removal	240,000
Mechanical and electrical installations	637,000
Structural works including roof replacement	735,000
Fitting out/interpretation	280,000
Prelim, contingency, design and inflation	1,008,000
Total	2,900,000

24. The capital cost of the proposed scheme is built into the Council's Capital Programme and accounted for in the 2020/21 MTFP and will be funded from corporate resources.

Financial Implications Revenue

25. A saving target of £250,000 was built into the previous MTFP to be delivered by 2020/21. This saving was made up of £60,000 for books and £190,000 for staffing. Currently there are a number of posts vacant within the Library staffing structure and a saving of £70,000 out of the £250,000 is currently being achieved.
26. To enable the service to deliver on increasing footfall, it will be necessary to build back in additional resources to the MTFP. It is therefore proposed to add back in £180,000, £60,000 for books and £120,000 for staffing. This proposal is subject to the 2020/21 MTFP being approved.

Library Service – Crown Street

27. Additional resources will enable the existing services at Crown Street Library to continue to be delivered, including:
- (a) Adult Lending Library
 - (b) Children's Library
 - (c) Reference Library
 - (d) Centre for Local Studies
 - (e) Increased events and activities for both children, young people and adults
 - (f) Bookstart Rhyme Time sessions
 - (g) Facilities for schools
 - (h) Teen/Young Persons area
 - (i) Study Area
 - (j) ICT facilities throughout
 - (k) Community Engagement both within Crown Street and external buildings/sites
 - (l) Meeting rooms and community activities
 - (m) Self-service
 - (n) Photocopying and fax
28. As mentioned earlier, additional resources will enable staff to develop a programme that will engage a broader audience therefore increasing footfall to the overall Library service.
29. It is also proposed that the opening hours of Crown Street Library will remain the same as they are currently:
- Monday, 9am to 6pm
 - Tuesday, 9am to 6pm
 - Wednesday 9am to 5pm
 - Thursday, 10am to 6pm
 - Friday, 9am to 5pm
 - Saturday, 9am to 4pm
 - Sunday, closed

A total of 49 hours per week

HR Implications

30. In order to deliver a strong programme and range of events and activities at the Library, alongside engaging residents in the service, it is necessary to review the existing staffing structure, putting in place one that is fit for the future. This will require consultation with the staff and trade unions prior to any implementation.

Procurement Advice

31. The Council's in-house Building Services team will deliver the project in line with corporate procurement rules.
32. The procurement has been assessed by the Corporate Procurement team to be Strategic and it is proposed that Cabinet agree the designation and that the decision for contract awards be delegated to the Council Procurement Board, chaired by the Managing Director, subject to a procurement process carried out in accordance with the Council Contract Procedure Rules.
33. That updates on contract awards be reported to members in the Annual Procurement Plan report.