

Invitation to submit an Expression of Interest to run a Partnership library on behalf of the London Borough of Barnet

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1. Introduction

The London Borough of Barnet is seeking Expressions of Interest from community groups, not-for-profit organisations or groups of residents to run a Partnership library, offering library services to local residents in Barnet at one or more of the following sites:

- East Barnet Library
 - South Friern Library
 - Mill Hill Library
 - Childs Hill Library
- Brookhill Road, London EN4 8SG
Colney Hatch Lane, London N10 1HD
Hartley Avenue, London NW7 2HX
Cricklewood Lane, London NW2 2QE

This document sets out what a Partnership library is, its role within the Barnet library network, the support package available to organisations and the outcomes expected of Partnership libraries. It contains information on the application process.

This document is part of an information pack which contains an application form and further information about Partnership libraries. The full information pack contains the following schedules which should be read when considering and preparing an Expression of Interest:

- Schedule 1: Support available for Partnership libraries
- Schedule 2: Expected service delivery and outcomes for Partnership libraries
- Schedule 3: Template: Expression of Interest
- Schedule 4: Information on each library

The information pack is available online at www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries. If you have any questions about the content of this information pack or would like to submit an expression of interest, please register on the ePortal at www.barnetsourcing.co.uk and follow the instructions on screen.

Individuals or organisations are invited to register. As an individual you can use your full name in the mandatory 'Company name' field. To assist with the registration process there is a 'help information' section at www.barnetsourcing.co.uk.

We are very keen that all residents and local community based organisations feel able to apply and we recognise that for some groups this may be the first application of this nature that they have made. Therefore, please do not hesitate to ask for assistance or to raise any queries with us at partnershiplibraries@barnet.gov.uk or 0208 359 7024.

Please note, that when we refer to a Partnership library, this refers to the library footprint area. This will be a self-contained area, in the building, from which library services will be offered. There may be other areas within the overall building, outside of the library footprint, that will be leased for other purposes.

The library minimum footprint for each of the proposed Partnership libraries is set out in Schedule 4.

If you would like to discuss this invitation, have any questions or would like to arrange to visit one of the libraries above, please contact Andrew Merritt-Morling, Library Service Review Programme Manager, on 0208 359 7024, or partnershiplibraries@barnet.gov.uk.

2. Background

In common with many local authorities, Barnet Council faces the challenge of managing increasing demand for its services, with fewer resources.

As part of responding to this challenge, library services in Barnet are changing. Following extensive consultation with residents the future library service will comprise of:

- six 'Core' libraries and four 'Core Plus' libraries which will continue to be funded and staffed for a reduced number of hours by council employed library staff;
- four community-run Partnership Libraries which will be supported by the council and which will be recognised as an integral part of the council's library network;
- an enhanced online digital library that will continue to be available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year; and
- the retention of the home and mobile library services to support the network of static sites, providing services to vulnerable residents.

In this way, a library offer will be maintained at all 14 of the current static library sites as well as maintaining the home and mobile services for some of the borough's most vulnerable residents – whilst still managing to deliver substantial savings over the next four to five years.

A critical element of the service will be the development of the four Partnership libraries. The information pack sets out the principles of a Partnership library, the level of support to be provided, the expectations of what it will deliver and the process through which community organisations or groups of residents can apply to deliver a Partnership library.

Throughout this information pack, the phrase Partnership library is used to refer to a community-managed library model which could be led by a local charity, not-for-profit-organisation, a local community group, resident's association or a group of residents that come together specifically to develop a Partnership library. The pack refers to the group/organisation wishing to run the library as a 'community body'.

We are now seeking community bodies who are interested in working with the council to develop a Partnership library at either one or all of the four identified locations.

3. Principles of a Partnership library

A Partnership library provides an opportunity for community bodies to deliver library services, harnessing community capacity to develop and shape a local service offer to best meet the needs of the local community. Partnership libraries will receive grant funding and other support from the council in return for delivering an agreed minimum level of service. Partnership libraries will be free to develop and expand services over and above this level, for example, providing other services or community activities as part of a community hub.

Partnership libraries will remain within the statutory public library network. They will operate within Barnet Library Service policies and procedures and provide a public library service for a minimum of 15 hours a week.

Partnership libraries will operate Barnet Library Service systems for the issuing and return of items and for internet access, enabling residents to retain one library card for all libraries within the Barnet network.

Partnership libraries will receive grant funding and other support from the council in return for delivering an agreed minimum level of service. The detail of the minimum level of library service that will be expected will be set out in an agreed and negotiated service level agreement.

The council will provide each Partnership library with the library footprint at a peppercorn rent, a core collection of book and lending resources, fixtures and fittings, an annual revenue grant and a support package. The lending resources and any other equipment provided will remain the property of Barnet Library Service.

Services provided by Partnership libraries will be accessible to all members of the community with no restriction placed upon access. Stock will be accessible to residents across the borough via the library reservation system.

4. Support available for a Partnership library

Partnership libraries will be part of the borough's statutory library provision and will be underpinned by support from the broader Barnet Library Service network. The library footprint will be made available at a peppercorn rent. It is anticipated that an initial lease term of 10 years will be granted to the community body, subject to a negotiation for each Partnership library.

Existing fixtures and fittings will be transferred. Whilst there will be no Barnet staff directly employed within a Partnership library, each Partnership library will receive an annual package of support from Barnet's Library Service which will include:

- Provision of book stock and lending resources, PCs and furniture;
- 12 core training sessions per year;
- Access to a library community engagement officer;
- Access to the council's IT support;
- The free use of the designated library space;
- Annual grant of £35k in year 1, £28k in year 2 and £25k thereafter; and
- Access to a transition loan of up to £8,000 to help community groups become established and to establish the Partnership library.

Over and above this, there will also be an opportunity for the Partnership library to purchase a range of other support services from Barnet's Library Service.

Each Partnership library will be linked to a Barnet Core or Core Plus library for operational advice and for the referral of complex enquiries. Each Partnership library is located near to other categories of library, and as part of the library network, Partnership libraries will operate as part of a mixed economy of local library provision.

The council will be engaging partners in the voluntary sector to help support the establishment of Partnership libraries, helping to support the initial engagement of volunteers

and the establishment of community organisations or groups of residents ready to operate a Partnership library.

Further details of the support package is set out in Schedule 1.

5. The expected outcomes of a Partnership library

In return for the support package, Partnership libraries will deliver services to an agreed service level which, as a minimum, will include:

- The provision of 15 public library opening hours each week;
- Resources available for loan and reference by registered Barnet Library users;
- Wi-Fi internet access;
- PC access;
- Selected literacy, learning and community events;
- Customer reservations; and
- Some space for study.

Communities will be supported to expand the service offer beyond the minimum service level requirements as dictated by the needs of local residents. It is anticipated that communities will be able raise funds and access sources of finance not accessible to the local authority and will be able to use these funds to support any local community aspiration to expand the library offer.

The arrangement will be managed via a service level agreement and a set of negotiated key performance indicators (KPIs) establishing the service outcomes residents can expect in return for the support package made available by the council.

These KPIs will include:

- Customer satisfaction ratings;
- Membership rates;
- Issue rates;
- Rates of Wi-Fi and PC use;
- Literacy and learning outcomes; and
- Rates of community use and community engagement.

Quarterly meetings will take place with each Partnership library to assess performance against KPIs, with on-going funding dependent upon the community organisation meeting key performance targets. This relationship will be managed by a library-based community engagement team from Barnet's Library Service.

6. How to apply

Step 1: Expression of Interest

Community bodies wishing to take forward the development of a Partnership library are invited to submit an Expression of Interest form.

The template for submitting an Expression of Interest is set out in Schedule 3

Completed Expression of Interest template should be submitted through the ePortal at www.barnetsourcing.co.uk

The closing date for the receipt of Expressions of Interest is **31 July 2016**.

Having considered the Expression of Interest successful community bodies (or group of community bodies if they come together during the process) for each Partnership library will then be invited to develop a more detailed business case. Documents in relation to this second stage will be available on the portal from 11 July 2016.

We aim to inform each organisation by **31 August 2016** the outcome of their Expression of Interest and those successful will be invited to submit a business case from **1 September 2016**.

Step 2: Business case

A third party support organisation will be available to offer guidance and support to those community bodies that are invited to submit an outline business case.

Guidance in developing a business case and the evaluation criteria will be available on the portal from 11 July 2016 along with a template for the business plan

A panel will consider each business case to see how closely it matches the requirements of the council. Community bodies will be invited to present their business plan and successful community bodies will be invited to work with the council to develop a transition plan to establish the Partnership library.

Step 3: Transition Plan to establish a Partnership library

Successful community bodies will be supported to develop a transition plan. The transition plan will include detailed timings of key steps required to transfer the running of the library from the council to the community body, such as signing the lease (if appropriate), signing the grant agreement, providing training support for volunteers, etc.

The transition plan will ensure that all parties can properly plan and prepare for the changes, whilst facilitating clear communication locally about when the changes in management will take effect.

It is anticipated that Partnership libraries will become operational from 1 April 2017, although an earlier date will be considered.

Outline timetable	
Deadline for Expressions of Interest	31 July 2016
Evaluation of Expression of Interest	1 – 31 August 2016
Invite to submit business case	1 September 2016
Deadline for business case	31 October 2016
Business case evaluated	7 November 2016
Committee approval	17 November 2016
Transition plans put in place	30 November 2016
Community body assumes running of Partnership Libraries	1 April 2017

7. Support available during the application process

With its partners, the council will provide a series of training and networking opportunities that will cover subjects such as community engagement, business planning, governance and legal structures, collaboration and consortium development, fundraising, volunteer recruitment, management policies and procedures, forms of legal structure (e.g. social enterprises, charities, Community Interest Company), and trading.

In addition, a limited level of support will be available to advise community bodies to take forward specific steps/elements of the proposals. This will be agreed on a case by case basis following an assessment of the strength of the successful organisation. For example, established groups and organisations will require far less support than newly formed groups that have come together for the first time.

For further information about the level and range of support available, and to consider how we would be able to support your proposal to run a Partnership library, please contact Andrew Merritt-Morling, Library Service Review Programme Manager, on 0208 359 7024, or partnershiplibraries@barnet.gov.uk.