



Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Alison Jobey.
Central and Collections Manager**

Tel: 07792 660564

Report of: Ajman Ali – Executive Director Operational Services

Report to: Communities, Parks and Leisure

Date of Decision: 6 February 2023

Subject: To commission the purchase of Library Books and other Materials by continuing our current approach with the North-West and Yorkshire Book Consortium (NW&YBC)

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (587)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				

Purpose of Report:

To seek authority to continue to commission library books and other materials, for Sheffield Libraries Archives and Information Service, for the next 3 years until 2026/2027 via a joint arrangement with the North-West and Yorkshire Book Consortium (NW&YBC).

Recommendations:

That the Communities Park and Leisure Committee

- Approve the commissioning and purchase of library books and other materials for the next 3 years until 2026/2027 through a joint arrangement with the North-West and Yorkshire Book Consortium (NW&YBC).

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: James Lyon
		Legal: Sarah Bennett
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
		Climate: Jessica Rick
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	Ajman Ali
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Councillor Richard Williams
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Alison Jobey	Job Title: Central and Collections Manager
	Date: 26/01/2023	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 It is a requirement of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 that Library Authorities provide books and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general and special requirements of both adults and children.
- 1.2 In order to maximise the number of books and other materials that can be purchased with the allocated budget, the Library Service has for many years joined together with other local authorities; First, with the South Yorkshire Libraries to form the Yorkshire Book Consortium and since 2009 with the addition of the libraries from the North-West Consortium to form the North-West and Yorkshire Book Consortium.
- 1.3 The Consortium combines the spending power of the 36 participating Authorities and the key objective is to procure the supply and servicing of library books and other materials in the most efficient and cost-effective method for both the participating authorities and bidders.
- 1.4 This arrangement has worked well for Sheffield to date, achieving more favourable discounts than if we were to go to the market alone and sharing the costs associated with going to the market; thereby providing a best value approach.
- 1.5 Our membership of the Consortium will also allow for the volunteer libraries to be able to access the same terms and conditions that the Council does.
- 1.6 It is proposed that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will be the lead Authority, with the participating Authorities named as potential users/beneficiaries on the contracts. All participating Authorities, including Sheffield City Council, will be asked to sign a letter of participation for three years from 2023 to 2026/2027 This will give the collective agreement that Rotherham can manage the process on behalf of the consortia. There is no obligation for any Authority named in the process to use the contract, or any confirmed commitment on the level of spend from any of the Authorities.
- 1.7 The current contracts run out on 31st May 2023. Our usual practice is to order books 3 months in advance, so new orders must be placed in the coming months to avoid delays and meet the expectations of our customers.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 This proposal specifically supports the priorities around:
 - Tackling inequalities
 - Better health and wellbeing
 - Thriving neighbourhoods and communities

- 2.2 Procuring library materials efficiently and cost effectively ensures our customers have access to a wider range and choice of materials, in a timely manner.
- 2.3 Borrowing, rather than buying, helps those on low incomes who may not be able to afford books.
- 2.4 Access to books and other library materials at an early stage in life improves the life chances of children.
- 2.5 Studies show that reading books helps to improve people's mental health and wellbeing.

3 HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 This Report is seeking authority to continue to participate in the consortium, and does not limit our procurement of books or other materials to any specific supplier. As such, we have not undertaken external consultation on this approach.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 As a Public Authority, we have legal requirements under Sections 149 and 158 of the Equality Act 2010. These are often collectively referred to as the 'general duties to promote equality'. Section 149(1) contains the Public Sector Equality Duty, under which public authorities must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that connected to protected characteristics and prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 4.1.2 The proposal is likely to have positive impacts if approved, by maintaining the range and choice of Books and other library materials available to the Citizens of Sheffield.

- 4.1.3 An EIA has been completed. Ref no 587

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 Proposal to utilise a consortium of 36 local authority members to achieve more favourable discounts, on the proportion of the total fund that is allocated to this Framework. Savings should be realised from utilising the

significant purchasing power (and economies of scale) of a large regional consortium, these would be unlikely to be achieved by SCC operating under a sole tender.

- 4.2.2 There are no other appropriate regional consortia which would give SCC better financial outcomes
- 4.2.3 There is no minimum or maximum level of spend required from members of the consortium, SCC are able to purchase stock elsewhere if more favourable financial and commercial terms are available. However, based on previous years it is anticipated that spend of around £750,000 could be placed through this framework.
- 4.2.4 Finally, there is no fixed or variable charge made as a result of membership of the consortium.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 As outlined at paragraph 1.1 it is a requirement of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 that Library Authorities provide books and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general and special requirements of both adults and children. The proposal in this report facilitates the Council complying with this requirement.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 Whilst this specific decision does not have any direct climate Implications, and a full Climate Impact Assessment is not required at this stage, the following should be noted.
- 4.4.2 When the Invitation to tender is published, all suppliers who submit a proposal will be requested to confirm that they will adhere to the Ethical Procurement Policy which includes sustainable considerations including economic, social, labour, and environmental factors.
- 4.4.3 Each supplier will also be asked to provide a Social Value proposal.

4.5 Other Implications

- 4.5.1 There are no other implications.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 A separate independent process by SCC would involve additional workload and costs and the likelihood of less favourable prices and terms. In previous exercises, the terms/costs achieved by the consortium framework were possible because of the number of participating authorities and the economies of scale in tendering.
- 5.2 Not having a mechanism for purchasing books and materials is not an

option due to our statutory duty.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Joining together with the 36 Authorities in the consortium, will ensure that we obtain optimum discounts and efficiencies leading to best value.
- 6.2 Options for the Council to purchase books and materials outside of the consortium are unlikely to secure the terms and discounts that would be on offer as part of a wider collaborative group. Additional costs would be incurred in resourcing any process and significant officer time would also be required.
- 6.3 It is essential that the Library Service continues to be able to provide a regular supply of new library books and other materials to our customers, both adult and children. Not having a mechanism for purchasing books and materials is not an option due to our statutory duty.
- 6.4 The current contracts run out on 31st May 2023. Usual practice is to order books 3 months in advance, so new orders must be placed promptly to avoid delay and meet the expectations of our customers.