

# Operational Decision Record

Publication Date 03 September 2024	Decision Reference Number 5166
<b>Decision Title</b>	
Approval to create a Call Off Framework Contract for creative design, furniture and installation work for libraries.	
<b>Decision Value</b>	
Up to £300,000	
<b>Revenue or Capital Spend?</b>	
Revenue	
<b>Spend Control Approval</b>	
Has the spend been approved by Spend Control Board? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> n/a Spend Control Board approval reference number: Spend approval will be obtained prior to calling off the framework.	
<b>Department</b>	
Communities Environment Resident Services	
<b>Contact Officer (Name, job title, and contact details)</b>	
Nigel Hawkins, Head of Culture & Libraries <a href="mailto:Nigel.hawkins@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Nigel.hawkins@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> / 07807 191454 or 64969	
<b>Decision Taken</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To authorise going out to an open procurement process to create a call off framework contract to seek creative design of library spaces, procurement of specialist library furniture and installation of works in order to provide inspiring library interiors.</li><li>• To approve spend on a project by project basis subject to the appropriate approval being in place through external funding secured or works identified through repairs and maintenance.</li><li>• To approve a Call Off Framework Contract for 4 years</li><li>• To delegate authority to the Head of Service for Libraries to award contracts for approved projects on behalf of Nottingham City Council under the call off framework contract and in line with financial regulations during the term, to ensure best value for money.</li></ul>	

## **Reasons for Decision and Background Information**

Nottingham City Libraries, over the last 6 years have undergone several new joint service centre builds, including Strelley Road Library and The Dales Centre Library, investing in improvements of our community libraries, including Bilborough Library as well as undergoing new builds for Nottingham Central Library (completed) and Sherwood Library (undergoing).

For all of these improvements, libraries worked with specialist design agencies to create vibrant, inspirational spaces for the community to enjoy.

Libraries are committed to investing in our buildings and currently have successfully sought grant funding to improve many of our library spaces. Over the next 4 years, subject to securing external funding, Libraries are looking to plan and implement a programme of investment. Work will only take place when resources have been secured and following appropriate approval of the works to take place. Libraries will look to provide both a qualitative offer for residents and help ensure a network of well-maintained facilities to off-set future liabilities for the Council.

Establishing this call off framework will permit the work to take place in a timely manner after the relevant approval, in particular where external grant funding is awarded where timeframes to spend are sometimes short.

Projects currently underway, which require the call of framework to be in place, include the development of several libraries for the Arts Council England Grant awarded project Counter Culture; approved under Operational Decision Record 4977.

Creating this Call Off Framework, will enable libraries to contract a supplier to support the modernisation of library interiors that will enable the library service to better support customer (local resident) needs, to increase the efficiency of library operations and to have a positive impact to drive up library visitor numbers.

We are seeking to upgrade and improve our library spaces to further its contribution to the social value of public libraries, through its role in providing safe, welcoming and neutral spaces. The social value of libraries is an important element in our provision, providing opportunities of personal development, community cohesion, local identity, health and wellbeing, reading and literacy and imagination and creativity that helps to build confidence in both individuals and communities as well as offering an equity in service delivery.

They provide safe and welcoming spaces for all to enjoy and with our aim to reimagine library sites they will be seen as a destination space in which individuals and families want to continue to visit.

**Budget subject to grant funding and internal budget forecasts:**

Grant funding: Arts Council England: Counter Culture, Value: £77,050

Internal Budget forecast (subject to securing external funding/internal resources becoming available): £222,500

**Other Options Considered and why these were rejected**

**Do Nothing:** This option was rejected as there is a need to improve our community library spaces. Lack of investment in our libraries can lead to reputational damage and an inferior and inequitable offer to communities.

**To go out to open tender to procure a design consultant:** This option was rejected due to requiring specific public library design experience and the timescales associated with an open tender is not conducive to meeting the requirements of externally grant funding deadlines as well as the recommendations that have arisen from the Executive Board approved, Libraries Needs Assessment conducted in 2022.

If we go out to a tender to create a Call Off Framework through an open tender process this will provide better options and best value to seek a supplier rather than just a design consultant.

**To enter into a contract with a design agency:** This option was rejected as we require library budgets to be flexible with no commitment to spend. The timescales to enter into a contract is also not conducive to meet deadlines and requirements of grant funding bodies.

**Reasons why this decision is classified as operational**

- This decision is within the value of an operational decision and is below £300,000
- Decision falls within agreed policies and is within the overall agreed budget controlled by the officer taking the decision

**Additional Information****Procurement Advice**

The contract will be procured as a call off contract to set up a framework for the provision of design and installation of furniture for various Nottingham City Council libraries. The contract will be part funded and using internal budgets.

Procurement do not have any concerns around procuring this contract.

**Finance Advice**

This decision seeks approval to undertake a procurement process to identify a creative design agency specialising in the provision of Library services. Expenditure will only take place when each project has been approved, ensuring that it is affordable and resources identified. This will allow the Council to commence approved projects in a timely manner and ensuring value for money. For example, for many grant funded projects, these often have time limits on the completion of the projects as part of the grant conditions, and this

decision allows the Council to meet these conditions in order to secure resources to improve front line services.

Maria Balchin

Senior Commercial Business Partner

21 August 2024

**Legal Advice**

There are no substantial legal implications arising from this decision at this stage to establish a framework. As detailed in the report there are (at present) limited suppliers within this market and so it is proposed to establish a framework, to call off framework contract to seek creative design of library spaces, procurement of specialist library furniture and installation of works to provide inspiring library interiors. It is noted that the services are to be contracted through a compliant procurement process and Legal services will work closely as necessary with the service area and procurement colleagues to support this project.

*Legal comments provided by Vendie Charles, solicitor, Legal Services on 22 august 2024*

**EIA considerations:**

All due equalities considerations will be given to individual projects and an EIA is not required for this overarching Framework.

**Risks of the decision and any mitigation of those risks:**

- Library development projects will be instigated on a project by project basis once appropriate approval is in place through external funding secured or works identified through repairs and maintenance.
- Revenue budgets will be monitored and managed in line with financial procedures and conducted with due diligence.

**Decision Maker (Name and Job Title)**

Colin J Parr, Corporate Director Communities Environment & Resident Services



**Scheme of Delegation Reference Number**

1

**Date Decision Taken**

30.08.24