

**QLDC Council
28 September 2017**

Report for Agenda Item: 8

Department: Corporate Services

Frankton Library – Expressions of Interest

Purpose

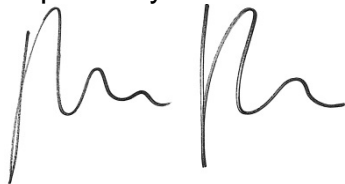
The purpose of this report is to enable QLDC to seek Expressions of Interest for the provision of a short-term leased library facility at Frankton.

Recommendation

That the Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Direct** the Chief Executive to seek Expressions of Interest for a potential Frankton Library lease;
3. **Agree** that the Chief Executive direct officers to prepare a Business Case for a leased library facility in Frankton;
4. **Note** that the terms conveyed in the EOI should reflect the short term intention of any lease arrangement, namely 3+2 years;
5. **Agree** that any proposal to enter into a lease for a Frankton Library be consulted on through the 2018 10 Year Plan given that this potential decision would require funding and timelines to be brought forward from 2020 (as per the 2015 10 Year Plan) to 2018/19.

Prepared by:



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15/09/2017

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Mike Theelen
Chief Executive

15/09/2017

Background

1. Since 2012, the Council has flagged the potential for a library facility at Frankton. In 2014, a public consultation process and the subsequent development of a Strategic Review of Library Services Report reinforced the projection that a Frankton Library would be necessary in the long term.
2. In 2015 Council consulted on the development of a Frankton Library Hub and included funding of \$5.3m in 2020. Although the location remained unconfirmed, it was assumed that co-location at the Queenstown Event Centre (QEC) was the most cost effective and convenient solution, as this did not involve a land purchase and the potential of a shared entrance.
3. This funding and the strategy assumed that the Queenstown Library presence would be reduced to become a 'shop front' presence ostensibly for the return and pick up of books for CBD workers.

Comment

4. Since 2015, a number of factors have influenced a shift in thinking around the provision of a Frankton library. The recent Queenstown Master Plan work has clearly demonstrated that a more significant library presence is not only desirable but appropriate for the CBD. This position was supported through the public engagement and as a consequence, a library has notionally been included on the Stanley St Master Plan Civic Heart space (in addition to the Frankton library outlined in the Ten Year Plan).
5. The QEC is also experiencing high growth and demand in relation to sport and recreation, with opportunities for the inclusion of a library seeming unlikely. This has cost implications.
6. Furthermore, Frankton and environs (Bridesdale, Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country, Retirement Village, Jacks Point etc) have experienced significant residential growth in addition to the relocation of schools. As such, there has been some demand from the community to accelerate the Frankton Library proposal.
7. To this end, a trial 'pop up' library has been established at the QEC on a Friday afternoon for two hours per week. The 'pop up' library has been open since 11 August 2017 and has already doubled its circulation (number of books, magazines etc that have been checked out).
8. Despite only opening mid-way through the month and for half the amount of hours per week than most of the smaller libraries, utilisation is already outpacing some of the more established libraries. The service has grown organically with one book now being issued every two minutes. This strongly suggests that the appetite for an appropriate library facility exists.

Recommendation

9. Although the future of a Queenstown Library presence has yet to be finalised, it is probable that a business case can be made for escalating the development of a Frankton Library.
10. A fast track and affordable solution would be to enter into a short term lease (3+2 years) of an existing premise or a proposed premise of approximately 550-850m² with easy access and ample parking in the Frankton area. The fit-out would be functional but modest to reflect the short term nature of the lease.
11. The leased library could be used as a pilot opportunity to test contemporary library layouts, technologies and fit-out. It is currently anticipated that the patrons of the Frankton Library would predominantly be the local community.
12. A short term lease is recommended in order to trial and refine a model of operation that will inform longer-term investment decisions i.e. location, size and configuration, and the ownership and development models for a more permanent library facility in Frankton.
13. The proposal creates an opportunity to focus on the creation of a flexible, technologically enabled, light and modern environment which would encourage the community to use the space for other purposes, such as performances and meetings. This could potentially build upon initiatives already finding success at other library locations in the district, such as wheeled shelving and hosting of events. It therefore could contribute significantly to the cultural, artistic and literary landscape of the wider Frankton area.
14. It is recommended that QLDC approaches the market seeking Expressions of Interest in providing suitable leased premises that are available in the near term, such that a comparison of options can be made to select the best fit to requirements.

Options

15. Option 1 Maintain the Status Quo

Advantages:

- No change to the timing of the existing budget as established in the Ten Year Plan.
- Provides time to develop the future requirements for the Library

Disadvantages:

- Unlikely to meet the demand from the community for the provision of a library facility in Frankton.
- Minimal opportunity to physically test and development the requirements

21. Option 2 Provide a near term cost effective library service in Frankton

Advantages:

- Provides a near term library solution to meet demand
- Minimal investment outlay
- Provides ideal opportunity to test, refine and develop longer-term library service model
- Minimises investment risk in a changing sector

Disadvantages:

None

22. Option 3 Accelerate the construction of a longer-term Frankton Library facility

Advantages:

- Brings the library on-stream earlier to meet the demand

Disadvantages:

- Potential investment risk

23. This report recommends **Option 2** for addressing the matter because this decision does not commit Council to the proposal but will enable the Council to consult on the matter through the 10 Year Plan process

Significance and Engagement

24. This matter is of low significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy because the decision is to seek an EOI and prepare a Business Case.

Risk

25. This matter relates to the strategic risk SR1 as documented in the Council's risk register. The risk is classed as low. This matter relates to this risk because library provisions in a new location relate to the current and future development needs of the community.

Financial Implications

26. There are no material financial implications in relation to this specific set of recommendations. It should be noted that in 2015 Council consulted on and included funding for \$5.3m in the year 2020 to develop a Frankton Library Hub.

Council Policies, Strategies and Bylaws

27. This matter is included in the 2015 10-Year Plan/Annual Plan

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions

28. The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities
- Can be implemented through current funding under the 10-Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

Consultation: Community Views and Preferences

29. **Following the EOI process**, the proposal to bring funding forward to lease a Frankton Library could be included in the 2018 10 Year Plan. This would then be the subject of broad consultation. This engagement will give a strong indication as to whether the proposal has community support prior to Council adopting the 10 Year Plan at the end of June 2018.
30. Further engagement to gauge support or otherwise for this concept can be undertaken. Clearly it would also be essential that some form of community engagement would also be undertaken to inform the design and services.