

Committee(s): Community and Health Committee	Date: 10 March 2020
Subject: Shenfield Library	Wards Affected: ALL
Report of: Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager	Public
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Summary

A public meeting took place at Shenfield Library on 7 March to discuss proposals for the Shenfield Library site. It is proposed that Brentwood Borough Council Officers make contact with representatives from ECC Library Services and ECC Planning Services to identify what the proposals for development are, identify suitable location for any interim arrangements from which the library provision can be held.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked: -

R1. To ask officers from Brentwood Borough Council to liaise with officers from Essex County Council's project team for the Shenfield Library development to seek possible solutions for a location from which an interim library service can be held.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. From November 2018 until 21 February 2019 Essex County Council undertook a consultation for provision of library services in Essex over the next five years. The draft strategy looked at a four-tiered approach to future provision. Tier 1 and 2 would remain open and managed by Essex County Council. Shenfield Library was identified as Tier 3, where Essex County Council could support the provision of library services run by a community or partner organisation.
2. After the consultation was completed Essex County Council announced that there would be no library closures in the next five years and that a new strategy would be developed.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Option

3. In 2018, Essex County Council (ECC) went out to consultation on the draft strategy for future library services. This was based on previous needs assessments, proximity of other libraries, usage, population, social deprivation and social isolation. The assessment then drew a conclusion on the overall priority ranking (need) for a library location.
4. There were significant responses to the consultation, and these informed the final version of the Council's strategy.
5. Shenfield Library was identified as a Tier 3 library and the proposal for this Tier of library is that ECC would invite community groups or other organisations to run them with assistance from ECC to maximise the number of libraries remaining.
7. A public meeting was held at Shenfield Library on 7 March and Councillor Susan Barker, Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate, Culture and Communities at Essex County Council spoke on proposals for the development of the Shenfield Library site. Some concerns were raised on the arrangements for a library provision during any construction phase. A new library provision is proposed as part of the new development.
8. It is proposed that officers from Brentwood Borough Council liaise with officers at Essex County Council so that the Borough Council are fully aware of the proposed development, can assist in identifying suitable location for any interim library provision arrangements, which will help to minimise the impact on the local community.

Reasons for Recommendation

9. To ensure that a library provision will continue to be provided for Shenfield residents during any construction phase to support the local community.

References to Corporate Strategy

10. The Essex Library service is managed by Essex County Council but does sit under the Developing Communities Strand of the Corporate Strategy to support investment and develop community facilities.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Director of Corporate Resources
Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

11. There are no direct financial implications with this report. Any costs for the development proposals would need to be met by Essex County Council. Officers time will be required in order to meet the recommendation

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring
Tel & Email: 01277 312500/Amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

12. The Council does not have a legal duty to provide the library services by officers liaising with the relevant officers from Essex County Council, they will be promoting the social values identified by the Council in its priorities.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Strategic Planning
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13. There may be opportunities for economic growth as a result of site development. This will depend on details of any proposal and so officers will need to liaise with Essex County Council in order to identify opportunities.

Background Papers

Essex Future Library Services Strategy 2019- 2024

Appendices to this report