

CAT Outline Business Case - Pre-Application Expression of Interest

The Newport Visitor Centre building in Long Street is ideally situated opposite a car park, close to Ysgol Bro Ingli, with disabled access and easily reached by all members of the public. Newport Town Council is very concerned that such an asset could be lost to the community once PCNPA closes its visitor service in the building. For this reason Newport Town Council is working in partnership with Newport Community Library (a registered charity working to an SLA agreement with PCC) to acquire the building for the community.

Newport Community Library is currently renting substandard premises in an unsuitable location with no security of tenure. If they were set up in the Long Street centre, they would be able to expand their activities in cooperation with the school, increase public use of the Library and cut their costs. The library group already works with the Health Centre and the local pharmacy to support carers, and has achieved accreditation as an Investor in Carers. The library also hosts outreach sessions held by CAB and PAVS. All these activities could be expanded and better provided in the Long Street building. Library volunteers have expressed their willingness to work with the Town Council to achieve our objectives.

There is potential to expand the facility to house the Town Council. This would be a saving for the Town Council but would more importantly give greater access to the Town Council for the community. The expansion of the facility would also provide additional space for the many groups in the community to hold their regular meetings and other events, which would also provide additional income.

There is enormous potential in this facility to provide services for the community in these days of cutbacks and to unify activities under one roof. Accessibility is vital to this and the parking and disabled facilities are key. There would be an opportunity for space to be made available to PCNPA Rangers, should this be of help.

The community strongly supports this proposal by Newport Town Council as illustrated by -:

- A vote in support of Newport Town Council's proposal to acquire the building at the meeting of Newport Community Forum Coordinating Committee on the 7th November.
- A public meeting on the 16th of November called by the Visitor Centre Action Group, in which the public overwhelmingly expressed their support for the Town Council proposal.
- Newport Town Council also feel confident that the 1400 people who signed the petition to 'make every effort to see the Newport Visitor and Information service kept open and to work with the community to expand the services offered by the centre to the benefit of people using the area', would feel we have obtained the best result possible.

The Town Council is currently expecting a substantial increase in its annual income from the Second Home Tax and already has a capital sum available for deposit. It also has an annual amount set aside specifically for the support of Newport Community Library. Newport Community Library has agreed to pay its fair share of running costs in the event of a move into the premises. We therefore feel in a very good position to acquire and sustain this facility.

The Newport Visitor Centre building has the potential, given its position, accessibility and possibility for expansion to become a hub for the community, the Town Council, visitors, local businesses and all groups and charities in Newport. As such, its loss would not only be a loss for the Newport community but for the future of its children.

Appendix 1

Summary of Present and Future Contribution to the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

A Prosperous Wales

- Provision of information to visitors and residents to support local businesses and community groups and activities.
- Contact point for Newport's new Time Banking Scheme.
- Financial and computer literacy skills training for library volunteers and for any volunteers working on future provision of merchandise.
- Local sourcing for any future provision of merchandise.

A Resilient Wales

- Close to public transport and coastal path to encourage reduced car use.
- Potential to develop the rear garden to support Newport's status as a Bee Friendly Town.

A Healthier Wales

- Extend existing links with Newport Health Centre to support carers, and other support groups, e.g. dementia groups.
- Newport Community Library has achieved accreditation as an Investor in Carers, and has a bronze award from Hywel Dda Health Board for its work with the Health Centre and the pharmacy to support carers.
- Opportunities for volunteers to be involved in all aspects of the services provided.

A More Equal Wales

- Fully accessible building.
- Newport Community Library has an Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Newport Community Library has public use computers, talking books, and large print books.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

- Outreach venue for CAB and PAVS, and in future other organisations.
- Local venue for surgeries for our Assembly Member and our Member of Parliament.
- Involving the community in local service delivery.
- Booking point for activities and facilities in Newport.
- Hire of mobility scooter.
- Newport Community Library is about to offer free IT advice sessions for tablets, ipads and phones.

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

- All Newport Community Library material is produced bilingually.
- There are 4 Welsh speakers among library volunteers.
- Regular visits by Ysgol Bro Ingli to borrow Welsh language books.
- A Welsh speaking Baccalaureate student from Ysgol Y Preseli currently volunteering in the library.

A Globally Responsible Wales

- Encouraging green travel through cycle use and hire, and easy access to Poppit Rocket, T5, and green bus, car sharing, walking.

Appendix 2

Present and Future Promotion and Support of Welsh Language Act

Newport Community Library actively supports and promotes the Welsh language. It produces all material for the public bilingually. There are currently 4 Welsh speakers amongst our core volunteers. Welsh speakers and learners using the library have a good chance of being able to use Welsh at most times. Newport has 37% percentage of Welsh speakers and a healthy number of Welsh learners. We are able to translate material in to Welsh without using an outside body. It is also the policy of the Pembrokeshire County Council who work in partnership with the Community Library. Pupils at Ysgol Bro Inqli make regular visits to the library accompanied by their teachers, where they are able to take out books in both Welsh and English. The library currently has a Welsh speaking pupil from Ysgol y Preseli working with us as part of her Baccalaureate.

Moving forward we are in a very strong position to influence the same attitude and approach to a combined Visitor Service and Community Library. In fact a move to the Visitor Centre will present more opportunities to promote the Welsh language, as the Visitor Centre building offers better facilities for community events. It will provide a building where educational and cultural events, including events for Welsh speakers and learners can be held. A vibrant venue for both English and Welsh speakers and Welsh Learners. These activities are very much in line with the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park's purpose for the Well Being of Future Generations Act. A responsibility to conserve and enhance the area's cultural heritage, which includes the Welsh language and its vision to see the language flourish in the PCNPA with a target to ensure an increase of 1% of the Park's population who can speak Welsh by 2022. It would also tie in with the principles of the Future Generations Act of taking a long term and sustainable approach to the future as well as focusing on now. The impact on people's lives in Wales in the future and working together better. The Parks own objective would be satisfied, in particular;-

- To encourage and support the development of sustainable employment and business, particularly in tourism and recreation.
- To work alongside communities to help them make the most of the National Park Authority.
- To Protect and promote the local culture of language, arts and heritage of the area.

*Newport Town Council Community Asset Working Group
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