

# Confidential Memorandum

December 18, 2019

**To:** Waitemata Local Board Chair and members  
**Subject:** Temporary library premises for Leys Institute  
**From:** Darryl Soljan, Head of Community Libraries (North & West)  
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## Purpose

1. To: Approve the lease of a retail space at 14 Jervois Rd, Ponsonby, for a period of 3 years to provide temporary library services while a plan for the restoration for Leys Institute is developed.

## Summary

2. Following a further recent assessment it has become clear that the Leys Institute Library and Gymnasium presents a significant health and safety risk to staff and the public. Council's Chief Engineer recommended the closure of this building to the Executive Leadership Team which is supported by the General Managers of Libraries & Information and Arts, Culture & Events. The operational decision has been made to cease services at midday Friday 20 December (or earlier if necessary).

Libraries have been urgently exploring options for an alternative service for the affected community, particularly around the provision of a 'pop up' library.

We wish to keep the time that the community is without a library service to an absolute minimum.

We have investigated seven sites.

There is a 'stand out' site that we wish to enter terms with via Panuku.

Suitable options in the Three Lamps area are limited.

Initial discussions with the landlord indicate we could tenant the site from February 1, 2020.

We have an exclusive period to agree terms. After Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January, the owner can negotiate with new parties with a risk that we lose this option.

We appreciate the inconvenient timing and the time of year, however we seek an urgent Local Board approval to enter a lease arrangement that will provide what we believe to be the best interim outcome for the community.

## Options considered

3. We do not believe 'do nothing' is an option.
4. Mobile library. This could provide some service on a limited number of days a week but the vehicles carry a small collection and have little 'space' on board. We do not believe this is a suitable ongoing option.
5. 'Container-type' pop up solution/s (or similar). Examples of this were seen in Christchurch following the earthquakes. These are generally quite small. We could also not readily identify where we could locate them.

6. Other Council buildings. Other than the Ponsonby Community Centre, we do not believe there are other suitable sites. A pop up could work at the PCC however it is some distance from Leys and would affect current PCC users.
7. In the end we felt that a 'semi-permanent pop up library' in a retail space within reasonable proximity to the Leys Institute would be the best alternative.
8. Of seven sites considered, four were quite some distance from the Leys Institute. We felt it was important to try and find a solution closer to the current library.

One of the three sites close to Three Lamps was a warehouse site which was poorly situated and uninsulated. The two remaining sites were excellent, high profile retail sites within 200m of Leys Institute. One was only 90m<sup>2</sup>. Our preferred option at 14 Jervois Rd is 114m<sup>2</sup> with wide frontages on both Jervois Road and Redmond Street, large windows and dual entry points. It is a high foot traffic area with two underground car parks which we will need for book deliveries and possibly as an additional disabled car park. It may be possible to utilize some customer parking at Leys Institute if it is safe.

### **What services would we provide from a 'pop up library'**

9. The 'pop up library' space will be significantly smaller than the current space. However this also gives us the opportunity to think of new ways of engaging and serving customers. We have a lot of insight into what parts of the collection are most used at each library so it is likely for example that the focus will be on a smaller but very high-quality fiction selection and very focused non-fiction that is frequently refreshed. We will maintain a high-quality children's collection.
10. Programming space will be limited. It is likely we will need to partner with the likes of the Ponsonby Community Centre or other partners to deliver our larger programs like 'Wriggle and Rhymes'. However, this could also give us the opportunity to reach new young families and connect with the nearby kindergarten and schools. We expect that a 'creative' use of space would allow us to conduct author talks and book clubs from the new boutique site.
11. We still expect to provide public printing and free wi-fi. It is likely we will need to reduce the number of public computers.

### **Financial considerations**

12. We have discussed the financial implications with Taryn Crewe, Commercial Manager for the Customer and Community Directorate. It is likely that the Libraries and Information Department will pay for lease costs out of its own budget until June 30, 2020. The Commercial Manager will arrange for an additional circa [REDACTED] p.a. to be added to the Waitemata Local Board budget in future years specifically to cover the new leasing cost (as the leasing cost will need to come from the Local Board budget). Essentially then, there is no additional cost to the Waitemata Local Board over the three-year lease.

### **Next steps**

13. We can proceed with securing these premises when we have a decision from the Local Board.