
Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (City Development)

Date: 20th November 2007

Subject: Requests for Scrutiny – Former Miles Hill and Royal Park Schools

Electoral Wards Affected: Chapel Allerton and Headingley

☐ Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity ☐

Community Cohesion ☐

Narrowing the Gap ☐

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Requests for scrutiny have been made by Councillor Jane Dowson and Councillor David Morton regarding the former Miles Hill School and Royal Park School respectively.
- 1.2 Councillor Dowson refers specifically to the “decision to demolish the former Primary School and of not allowing Area Management sufficient time to review the needs of the local community and consult interested parties”.
- 1.3 Councillor Morton wants to look at the time line between the November 2003 Executive Board and August 2007 and “see why the original aspiration for community use of the building has not been realised and instead we have a largely residential development and a private one as well”.
- 1.4 Councillors Dowson and Morton have been invited to attend today’s meeting to detail to the Board the reasons for their particular request for scrutiny.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 With regard to the former Miles Hill school the City Development Department put demolition of the building on hold pending Area Management making a case to the Council’s Asset Management Group for the retention of this building.
- 2.2 The Asset Management Group met on the 2nd November 2007 and agreed to support (i) a more detailed exploration of the three favored options put forward by the Area Management Team which all promote new build solutions of various sizes on the site and (ii) the consideration of the site for affordable housing and (iii) the demolition of the existing school building, which is not required under any of the options promoted. In order to protect the Council’s interests the Asset Management Group has

asked the Area Management Team to undertake further feasibility work to address the revenue and capital funding issues and an assessment of whether alternative Council or third party sites in the local area present a better opportunity for the facilities proposed.

- 2.3 The attached report of the Director of City Development sets out the general procedures and processes including consultation that applies when school buildings and land are declared surplus to requirements.

3.0 Options for Investigations and Inquiries

- 3.1 When considering requests for Scrutiny, the Scrutiny Board (City Development) shall determine;
- how further scrutiny meets criteria approved from time to time by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee?
 - consider the current workload and whether a formal Inquiry can be adequately resourced?
 - whether a formal Inquiry should be undertaken?

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Board is requested to consider:
- (i) the request for scrutiny by Councillor J Dowson concerning the former Miles Hill school.
 - (ii) the request for scrutiny by Councillor D Morton concerning the former Royal Park school.
 - (iii) the report of the Director of City Development on the general procedures and processes including consultation that applies when school buildings and land are declared surplus to requirements.
 - (iv) what further information, if any, is required by the Board in order to determine whether to undertake further scrutiny in respect to either request, and if so, what specifically it wishes to look at in order that suitable terms of reference can be drafted for consideration by the Board at a future meeting.