

Report of Director of Children's Services and Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 8th February 2017



Subject: Relocation of Medical Needs Teaching Service from the Grafton Centre

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Kirkstall Ward and Hyde Park & Woodhouse Ward		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: 10.4.3		
Appendix number: 2		

Summary of main issues

1. This report is put forward in the context of the council's Best Council Plan 2015-20 (2016-17 update), specifically the ambition of being '*an efficient and enterprising organisation*' through maximising utilisation of council property. The proposal within the report will also contribute to achieving the Best Council Plan priorities for 2016-17 of '*improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps*' and '*supporting children to have the best start in life*' through provision of a specialist education service in a fit for purpose and well maintained environment.
2. Through the council's Asset Review Programme the Grafton Centre site has been identified for rationalisation, subject to relocation of occupying services. The programme aims to make best use of the council's estate, and has delivered nearly £5m of revenue savings since 2013/14. The release of sites also helps support wider corporate priorities such as housing and economic growth, and achieving challenging capital receipts targets.
3. Following the successful relocation of one service from the centre in early 2016 the Medical Needs Teaching service is now the sole occupant of the building. In order to vacate the site for disposal and realisation of a capital receipt relocation of Medical Needs Teaching Service is required.
4. Working with Children's Services, Asset Management has identified alternative accommodation for the service at Queenswood Education Centre, subject to some capital works being first carried out.

Recommendations

5. Executive Board is asked to:

- i. Note the contents of the report;
- ii. Approve capital works at Queenswood Education Centre to enable the relocation of Medical Needs Teaching Service from the Grafton Centre and subsequent disposal of the site, as per values detailed in confidential appendix 2;
- iii. Approve the injection of funds, as outlined in confidential appendix 2, into the Capital Programme;
- iv. Note that authority to spend the capital budget at Queenswood Education Centre will be sought from the Director of City Development, in-line with the council's scheme of delegation; and
- v. Note that the Head of Asset Management is the officer responsible for the implementation of the proposal outlined within this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To seek Executive Board approval to a programme of capital works at Queenswood Education Centre (QEC) to enable relocation of the Medical Needs Teaching Service (MNTS) from the Grafton Centre (GC) and subsequent disposal of the site.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The East Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) was re-commissioned in April 2016 by Children's Services to deliver the Medical Needs Teaching Service for Leeds. The Service offers sessional teaching to children and young people who:
- (Group 1) are in-patients at Leeds Children's Hospital and at Woodhouse Hall Hospital; and
 - (Group 2) have mental health issues with CAMHS involvement who cannot manage in school. These young people are taught in Grafton Centre. Some young people are also taught in their home as needs arises, transferring into Grafton as they progress.
- 2.2 The objective of the service is to enable re-integration back to the pupil's school when appropriate, working with any other agencies involved with the child/young person and their family. MNTS teachers move between teaching in the hospital and teaching in the centre or home of the pupil as need of pupils require.
- 2.3 The QEC was opened in 2011 following a refurbishment project to ensure specific parts of the site were fit for purpose. The whole site provides accommodation for three services:
- The Schools' Library Service, managed by City Development
 - The Vine Service, managed by Leeds City College
 - North Leeds Community Nursery, a private childcare provider based within a standalone modular building
- 2.4 The Vine element of QEC is equipped to offer a diverse range of indoor and outdoor sensory and therapeutic areas along with more formal spaces for learning a number of classroom environments. Review of the QEC established considerable underutilisation of the space occupied by Vine that could offer suitable space for another education based service.
- 2.5 The Vine service provides an education service to young people aged 19 to 25 who have a variety of complex needs including physical, learning and health needs. The service was transferred from Children's Services to Leeds City College on 14th November 2016, following approval by Executive Board on 19th October 2016. A lease has been agreed with Leeds City College which will see them continue to use the QEC until 31st August 2019, on a diminishing basis. From September 2017 each new intake of pupils will attend the service at the college's Beeston campus, resulting in the service being wholly delivered at Beeston by September 2019.

- 2.6 To ensure the QEC is as cost efficient as possible to the council, it is imperative that use of space within the building is maximised.
- 2.7 A project group has been established consisting of officers from Children's Services with the remit to increase the use of the QEC by reconfiguring the learning spaces to create suitable accommodation for the MNTS. It is recognised that the two services (Vine and MNTS) will be appropriate neighbours within the space at QEC.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 GC has been identified, through the council's Asset Review Programme, as a site for rationalisation predominantly due to the investment required to address all the maintenance issues highlighted in the latest condition survey. The last report was produced in 2009 and identified £345,000 of works required within the next 5 years, including replacement of all windows and doors, and upgrading of electrical and mechanical installations.
- 3.2 As the site has been identified for rationalisation the majority of these works have not taken place unless necessary on the grounds of health, safety or security. All statutory checks, including fire, health and safety have continued on regular basis to ensure the accommodation remains safe for the young people attending and staff who work there.
- 3.3 In early 2016 Asset Management, in partnership with Children's Services, relocated the Pupil Tuition Team to the former Armley Lazer Centre (now named West Leeds Activity Centre). Since this move MNTS has been the sole occupying service of GC.
- 3.4 Several options for relocation of MNTS have been considered by Asset Management over the past few years but only the move to QEC has proved feasible from both a service provision and finance point of view. The underutilisation of space at QEC offers a solution to the accommodation needs of MNTS, who require a well thought out appropriate environment from which to deliver its service to some of the most vulnerable pupils within the city. The space at QEC needs some adaptation and has the potential to accommodate future growth of the service, if required.
- 3.5 The GC has an annual running cost of c.£36,000 paid by Children's Services. This running cost would be reapportioned against the running costs of the QEC post move of the MNTS.
- 3.6 Refurbishment of some of the learning spaces within the QEC will be required to accommodate the specific needs of children with social emotional and mental health issues that access education through MNTS. In addition, the consolidation of the Vine service within a reduced footprint will also require building adaptations..
- 3.7 Civic Enterprise Leeds (CEL) has undertaken a costing exercise to ensure the project cost of all necessary works fit within the anticipated capital receipt for GC.

A detailed breakdown of costs has been received confirming the required works will fall within the financial envelope from disposal of the GC site.

- 3.8 A Design and Cost Report will be produced once the works have been tendered to either Leeds Building Services, or external contractors, and costs confirmed. The report will be submitted to the Director of City Development seeking authority to spend, in-line with the council's scheme of delegation.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport & Planning has been consulted and is supportive of the proposed move and associated capital works.
- 4.1.2 The Executive Member for Children and Families has been consulted and is supportive of the proposed move of MNTS to QEC.
- 4.1.3 Ward Members for both Kirkstall and Hyde Park & Woodhouse have been informed of the proposed service move.
- 4.1.4 Consultation with all relevant council directorates and colleagues from Leeds City College has been on-going since February 2016. In addition the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors of the East SILC and the MNTS Lead have been engaged throughout the feasibility and design process.
- 4.1.5 There will be no negative impact on current Vine staff at the QEC due to their inclusion in the proposal and assistance with the development of the new site design and endorsement of the proposal. The MNTS staff are in favour of the move to the QEC as the new environment offers service improvement opportunities.
- 4.1.6 Children's Service Asset Management Board supported the proposal at its meeting on 11th October 2016.
- 4.1.7 The council's corporate Asset Management Board considered and supported the proposal at its meeting on 8th December 2016.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Approved Equality Impact Assessment is attached at appendix 3.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Central to the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan, and the Children and Families Act 2014 (birth to 25), is the need to ensure that children and young people have access to the best quality of provision and support to enable them to achieve their outcomes. This is key for children and young people with SEND in terms of their preparation for successful adulthood. Critical to ensuring this quality is that the MNTS provision benefits from being integrated into an appropriate educational establishment to ensure continuous and expert oversight of teaching, learning and support. It is equally important for the learners to be given the opportunity to experience and benefit from accessing a setting that can provide

broader opportunities for inclusion and social development. This proposal therefore particularly supports the Best Council Plan outcome for everyone in Leeds to 'do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life'.

4.3.2 The proposed relocation will contribute towards the council's Asset Management Plan 2014-17 objectives of:

- Asset rationalisation and achievement of £5m revenue savings by March 2017;
- Support service planning across directorates;
- Make the council's portfolio work better; and
- Disposal of surplus property.

4.3.3 The way the project will be carried out will be in line with the council values by consulting with local service users about changes that potentially affect their lives, and giving adequate consideration to equality and diversity issues when implementing change.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 This proposal directly supports the council's Asset Review Programme of achieving revenue savings and capital receipt sites.

4.4.2 It also removes the need to spend £345,000 on maintenance at the GC, as identified in its most recent condition survey.

4.4.3 The closure of the GC will ensure an additional service charge budget is secured against the running costs of the QEC. Without this additional budget, the QEC could run at a deficit within 2017/18 financial year.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The Executive Board has authority to discharge any function in relation to the management of land, (including valuation, acquisition, appropriation, disposal and any other dealings with land or interest in land) and Asset Management.

4.5.2 The information in confidential Appendix 2 attached to this report relates to the financial or business affairs of the council. It is considered that the release of such information would or would be likely to prejudice the Council's commercial interests in relation to the potential future disposal of the site in question by prospective purchasers having access to information about the nature and level of consideration which may prove acceptable to the council. It is considered that whilst there may be a public interest in disclosure, much of this information will be publicly available from the Land Registry following completion of any disposal transaction and consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time. It is therefore considered that this element of the report should be treated as exempt under Rule 10.4.3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The following risks and mitigating actions are considered to be of importance:

- 4.6.2 *Risk:* Actual capital costs for works to QEC escalate to higher than the capital receipt anticipated from the sale of the GC.
Action: Tight project controls in place with regular reviews of costs as works are delivered.
- 4.6.2 *Risk:* Sale of the GC site fails to achieve its estimated value.
Action: Reserve to be put on the property if sold at auction, or bids beneath the estimated value are rejected if disposal is by way of formal offers.
- 4.6.3 *Risk:* Risk of disruption to other QEC users.
Action: The arrangements will complement existing use of the centre and enhance the use of the site.
- 4.6.4 *Risk:* Safeguarding and Health & Safety.
Action: Full and robust risk assessment will be undertaken.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This proposal gives an opportunity to increase the use of the QEC and ensures the site is cost efficient to the council.
- 5.2 The proposal also provides a better conditioned and more appropriate location from which the MNTS will be delivered.
- 5.3 Relocation of MNTS will deliver a site to contribute towards the council's challenging capital receipts target.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is asked to:
- i. Note the contents of the report;
 - ii. Approve capital works at Queenswood Education Centre to enable the relocation of Medical Needs Teaching Service from the Grafton Centre and subsequent disposal of the site, as per values detailed in confidential appendix 2;
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7 Background documents¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

7.1 None