

## CABINET

20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016

### RELOCATION OF THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

#### Report of the Director of Places (Development and Economy)

Strategic Aim:	Creating an active and enriched community, Creating a brighter future for all	
Key Decision: Yes	Forward Plan Reference: FP/161015/01	
Exempt Information	<p>Annexe E to this report contains exempt information and is not for publication in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</p>	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	<p>Cllr T King – Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Development</p> <p>Cllr R Foster – Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding Children and Young People</p>	
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Ward Councillors	All	

#### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the proposal to combine the project 'Oakham Library – Essential Works' (previously approved by Cabinet on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016) with this project – 'Relocation of the Children's Centre'.
2. Approves the release of up to £400k to support the relocation of the Children's Centre from Catmose College to the Oakham Library site, and an additional £60k to deliver the library refurbishment works.
3. Authorises the Director of Places (Development and Economy) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Places (Development and Economy), the Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding Children and Young People and the Director for Resources to progress

Option 2 that enables the most advantageous elements of a combined project.

4. Authorises the Director of Places (Development and Economy) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Places (Development and Economy), the Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding Children and Young People and the Director for Resources to select the procurement route, establish the award criteria and appoint the most advantageous supplier or suppliers dependent upon the procurement route selected for the combined project.

5. Authorises the Director of Places (Development and Economy) to appoint the Lead Designer for the combined project, in order to expedite the urgent works required.

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the release of up to £400k to relocate the Children's Centre (Visions) from Catmose College to the Oakham Library site.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet approval to combine this project with Oakham Library essential maintenance works, to minimise duplication of construction costs and site disruption.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet approval to increase the funding identified for the library maintenance works from £220k (approved by Cabinet on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016) to £280k, as a result of further detailed review of the site maintenance issues.
- 1.4 To give powers to the Director of Places (Development and Economy), the Portfolio Holder for Places (Development and Economy), the Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding Children and Young People and the Director for Resources to appoint the Lead Designer; and to select the procurement route, establish the award criteria and appoint the contractor who will deliver the combined project, so enabling the provision of additional school places at the earliest opportunity.

## **2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 On the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 a report was presented to Informal Cabinet that set out various options for the relocation of 'Visions' to provide space at Catmose College for additional pupil numbers. That report advised that pupil demand would outstrip availability by approximately 180 places by 2020 and that these works would partially address the issue.
- 2.2 To partially address the short term requirement it is proposed that 'Visions Children's Centre' is relocated to the centre of Oakham; releasing space within Catmose College for the provision of up to an additional 30 secondary school spaces per year i.e. a total of 150 additional spaces.
- 2.3 The space (150 square meters) vacated by 'the Children Centre' will be converted for school use. To provide this additional capacity in time for Academic Year

2017/18, Catmose College have indicated that vacant possession will be required by the end of April 2017.

- 2.4 Visions Children Centre is currently located at Catmose College under an on-going lease arrangement. Provision of a Children's Centre is a legal requirement and defined in Part 1 section 5A of the Childcare Act. The Children's Centre service is inspected by Ofsted under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 (as amended by the Apprenticeship Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009).
- 2.5 The Childcare Act 2006 sets out the requirements of Local Authorities to ensure that early childhood services are accessible, integrated and proactive in encouraging parents to take advantage of the available services in their community. There is a strong case for why children's centres should retain open access services as part of a pathway to delivering effective targeted work.
- 2.6 There is a lack of alternative provision that offers this range and combination of support to families on a daily basis in Rutland. The Visions Children's Centre plays a critical role in helping to achieve this by providing parents and children with access, at the earliest opportunity, to suitable support services that help contribute to their overall well-being, including children's emotional resilience and readiness for school and to support adult's parenting capacity.
- 2.7 The early year's services provided by the Children's Centre form an integral part of Rutland's Early Help Strategy 2015 and is a key priority in the Children, Young People and Families Plan (draft) 2016 – 2019. "Local authorities need to recognise the value that early intervention can play in reducing long-term costs, and to invest in children's centres as hubs for local improvement activity" Ref: *Measuring what matters - A Guide to Children's Centres* The service also contributes to a number of the Councils strategic aims including:
- Creating a brighter future for all.
  - Meeting the health and well-being needs of the community
- 2.8 *Ofsted Guidance April 2013 and Subsidiary Guidance - to support the inspection of Children's Centres 2014* reinforces the message from national research that it is vitally important to ensure collaboration between Children's Centres, local health services, particularly midwifery care and health visitors, as well as with wider partners such as Jobcentre Plus, housing, adult learning and other early childhood services, including those offered by the voluntary sector. Consistent, collaborative partnerships to achieve and monitor the essential outcomes will improve the health and development of children in the local area.
- 2.9 The existing Children's Centre at Catmose College allows the Children Centre team and key partner agencies to deliver key elements of the core offer of a Children Centre service, as well as services delivered in outreach centres in Uppingham, at the MOD Barracks and in families' homes. The use of the Children Centre space at Catmose has evolved to respond to national and local drivers for change to the Children's Centre programme;

- Greater collaboration and co-working with health, social care services and early years: the Children Centre team provide space each week at Catmose to enable the following health services to run; a weekly antenatal clinic for midwives and health visitors, antenatal support group for prospective parents, post natal support groups and breast feeding support group and then a range of support programmes for young babies and toddlers and parents, developmental assessment clinics, including children with additional needs and multiple births and a speech and language clinic. The Children Centre team and the health personnel use the **large group room and adjoining kitchen space**, as a flexible space that will accommodate 15 toddlers and parents. This space is also used for stay and play sessions involving a range of messy play activities alongside the existing library space to deliver story time and music sessions. The space is also used to conduct supervised contact visits for Children Centre staff, social workers and looked after children, often at the end of the day. The space is used regularly by the Child minding group, Homestart, and as the need arises to deliver welfare and employment advice by agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau and Job Centre Plus. There is a small **quiet room** to do individual clinical/therapeutic work with a parent or child. The **large reception / meet and greet space** allows for parents to leave their prams and buggies in a warm and secure environment.
- Targeted family support to vulnerable families – there is a **small office space** for 5 members of staff, which operates as a hot desk space to allow the family support practitioners to complete and store case files and the data officer to complete the data tracking and performance monitoring on the e-start system which is a requirement for Ofsted monitoring of the Centre's performance. The small office space is also used to deliver case supervision,
- Meeting the needs of targeted groups – because of the restrictions on the space and it use out of hours, the groups for fathers and male carers, siblings of disabled children and the adult learning sessions happen off site, at Jules in the evenings and at the weekend and at the Enterprise Park as well as in Uppingham and on the Barracks.
- Supporting children's health and well-being and readiness for school. There is no **outdoor space** at Catmose College therefore any outdoor activity has to be arranged offsite in local parks which can involve funding transport.

2.10 The Children's Centre at Catmose College provides a wide range of services to families across the Rutland Area. As of September 2015 there were 1,566 children aged under 5 years registered, out of a total of 1,740 (90%). **Annex A** identifies the various locations of the families across the County.

2.11 In addition to utilising the space at Catmose, the Children's Centre delivers a range of groups and 1 to 1 support across Rutland. This includes a regular weekly

presence in Uppingham and a number of weekly sessions at the MOD sites. The Children's Centre staffs also deliver sessions at Jules and at the Enterprise Park. The space at Catmose has some spare capacity on Monday and Friday which represents the only flexible time available for use and as such usually supports sessions such as social care 'contact' meetings and family support worker sessions with families, however the majority of activities for the rest of the week are at 100% utilisation.

- 2.12 In addition to the formal activities there are a number of 'drop-in' activities when families will attend the centre for guidance and information. A full schedule of usage is provided at **Annex B**
- 2.13 Whilst providing an excellent service the asset at Catmose College does not fully meet the requirements of a 'Children's Centre'. A detailed requirement together with justification is provided at **Annex C**.
- 2.14 A significant number of options for the re-provision of a Children's Centre have been considered. These have been discounted and are outside the scope of this report. Focus is now on the provision of a Children's Centre within the greater curtilage of the Library.
- 2.15 As stated elsewhere within the report Cabinet has previously given approval for a project that will undertake 'Essential Works' within the Library. If Cabinet approves the additional funds for the relocation of the Children's Centre then the proposal is that the projects are combined for the following reasons:
- There will be economies of scale generated from the use of one contractor with reduced overheads
  - On site coordination will be significantly simplified with contractual conflicts between suppliers eliminated
  - Single point of client contact
  - Reduced potential Health and Safety issues.
- 2.16 The development of the Children Centre at Catmose was supported by a £317k grant from the Department for Education (DfE). Initial discussions with the DfE have indicated that they would positively consider a deferral of Clawback; provided that the Council continued to provide a Children's Centre and that the costs of the relocation were at least equal to the initial grant. In essence they are seeking to protect their investment. This is subject to a formal submission to the DfE being approved and is likely to be dependent on the suitability of the alternative provision being proposed.
- 2.17 Effective Children's Centre provision requires a number of critical components as outlined in the Ofsted Framework for Children Centre delivery. Rutland County Council will be required to ensure that the relocation of the Centre and the

services offered remains in line with the Statutory Guidance<sup>1</sup> for registered Children's Centres, and this will be one of the factors considered by the Educational Funding Agency in deciding whether or not to exercise their 'Clawback'.

2.18 The functional requirements for a relocated Children's Centre are as follows:

Description
Reception Space & seating
Accessibility Toilet including baby changing facilities
Health Room with sink and storage
Family meeting space with glass fronting
Staff Office
Kitchen facility large enough to run family cooking sessions
Open play space to be used for sessions with families
Creative play space
Adult learning space
Secure Buggy Shelter for up to 10 prams minimum.
Safe enclosed external Play Area
Bookable meeting space
Easily accessible
Integrated with other services
Welcome, non-stigmatised environment and location
Integrated flow – space.
Independent opening and closing flexibility
Parking facilities and on bus routes.

2.19 Each of the options considered in section 3 will meet the requirements as identified above, and in some areas provide additional resources.

2.20 Relocation of the Children's Centre to the Oakham Library site would generate additional benefits to the Council beyond the required provision of a Children's Centre. There is a significant overlap of users served by the public library and the Children's Centre. Provision of a single site will encourage use of both services by users, in a more convenient and easier to access town centre location. The library service will benefit from a regular flow of family visits, and improved facilities for the delivery of children's activities and events. Programmes of activity will be delivered through a partnership between the Children's Centre and the Library in a single location, rather than replicated at different times and in different locations. Users will benefit from having both groups of expert staff on hand to provide family and literacy support from one location.

2.21 Following the engagement of an architectural practice to review the outline estimates produced in-house for essential library maintenance, it has been identified that a further £60k is required, in addition to the £220k previously agreed

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<sup>1</sup> Sure Start Children's Centre Statutory Guidance 2013, Department for Education

by Cabinet to deliver these works. This is due to the condition of the roofing being in a poorer state than previously believed, and the extent of the electrical works required.

- 2.22 There has been no significant refurbishment work undertaken on Oakham Library in the 19 years since Rutland took over the service in 1997. As maintenance works are undertaken, opportunities will be explored to improve the configuration and delivery of the service. A key potential improvement could be the introduction of self-service access to the building, using a library card and PIN, a system which is already in operation in Peterborough Libraries (branded "Library Plus"). This would allow out-of hours access to library services, greatly enhancing the reach of the service, with security being provided by CCTV coverage. These service improvements were originally intended to be delivered using the Oakham North Section 106 funding.

### **3 OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 3.1 In reviewing the options the following points should be noted:

- All costs are indicative. The costs for the Modular Builds are based upon budget prices quoted by suppliers. The costs for Option 3 – Traditional Build are based on published unit rates. External works are based on existing information and again published rates. As design progresses, risk will be designed out, thereby increasing financial certainty.
- The programme dates are indicative and focus on 'critical path' items. The end date has been agreed with Catmose College, however in any construction project there can be unforeseen delays.
- Discussions are ongoing with planning. A final decision is dependent upon a full submission. Key to this is that this development is in a Conservation area. Any such development must enhance or maintain the conservation area. Any design will need to be sympathetic to these requirements and have minimum or little visual impact.
- The original 'Visions' in Catmose College benefited from a grant of £317k from the DfE Clawback. Initial discussions with DfE have indicated that they would not seek to exercise the 'Clawback' option if £317k or more is expended on relocating 'Visions' to provide a facility that is comparable. However this is to be formally confirmed.
- It has been assumed from the requirements above that the space required for 'Visions' is 200 square metres. The majority of suppliers offer units based upon a modular unit that is dictated by factors such as ease of transport. Some manufacturers will offer bespoke units but because of need to develop new jigs

and get revised certification for both, the programme will extend and costs will increase. Given this the most suitable size has been selected for the purposes of developing the cost estimate.

- 3.2 A number of options have been considered. The operational benefits of positioning the relocated Children's Centre next to the library far outweigh those offered by other locations. A 'Do-Nothing' Option is included for consideration, as this addresses the impact of the DfE exercising their 'Clawback'.

### **Option 1: Do Nothing**

The 'Do-Nothing' option involves the Children's Centre remaining where it is.

**Description of Works:** This would involve the Children's Centre remaining where it is. Under the current lease agreements this is technically possible. However, Catmose College would then be faced with a number of options:

- Not to provide additional pupil places
- Provide alternative accommodation for the function they are planning to locate in the Children's Centre' space. This would entail moving to alternative accommodation within the College (if available) or acquisition of additional space via purchase or lease.

**Planning Issues:** Given the location of the building and the assuming that all works will be contained within the existing envelope there will be no planning issues.

**Programme:** Not possible to comment at the moment other than this will be by far the shortest programme.

**Comment:** For obvious reasons this option will not relocate the Children's Centre and could lead to Catmose College refusing to provide additional pupil places. However it will ensure that 'Clawback' is not applied in this instance thereby removing financial risk from the project.

### **Option 2: Modular Build**

Modular Build adjacent and linked to the Library for use as a Children's Centre see plan at **Annex D**.

**Description of Works:** This would consist of a modular unit acquired from a supplier, with a linkage to the library building. It would provide similar space to that at 'Visions'. This is an asset with a 25 year plus design life. The indicative floor space would be 200 square metres, with the final internal area being determined by the configuration and size of the units specified.

**Planning Issues:** A range of external claddings are available to dress the building – these include vertical timber cladding and brick. Given the proposed location within the Conservation Area this will be an advantage as suitable cladding can be used to soften the impact of the building. Initial planning advice has indicated that

in order to break up the impact of the build, a contrasting finish should be considered, and the unit should be stepped back from the line of the existing building. These comments will be used to define the finish of the unit, if this option is approved.

**Programme:** Please see below

	Task	Action	Duration	Milestone
1	Complete concept design (RIBA stage 2)	Designer	3 weeks	08.09.2016
2	Submit planning application	Designer		09.09.2016 <sup>1</sup>
3	RCC approval & instruction	RCC		20.09.2016
4	Planning decision process	RCC	8 weeks	
5	Planning decision (DC meeting 27.10.2016)	RCC		27.10.2016
6	Developed design & technical design (RIBA stages 3 & 4)	Designer	5 weeks from 07.09.2016	20.10.2016
7	Building regulation	RCC	Ongoing	
8	Procurement internal process	RCC	2 weeks	03.11.2016
9	Out to tender	Designer		04.11.2016
10	Tender period	-	3 weeks	
11	Tenders returned	-		28.11.2016
12	Tender analysis & approvals	Designer / RCC	2 weeks	
13	Place order	RCC		09.12.2016
14	Contractor's lead in period	Contractor	3 weeks <sup>2</sup>	
15	Start on site	Contractor		03.01.2017
16	Construction phase (RIBA stage 5)	Contractor	17 weeks <sup>3</sup>	02.05.2017
17	Handover	Contractor		02.05.2017

<sup>1</sup> Assumes no requirement for specialist reports of trees, ecology, etc

<sup>2</sup> Allowance for Christmas period

<sup>3</sup> Absolute minimum construction period and assumes no abnormal ground conditions; no prolonged material delivery periods; that the existing mains incoming electrical and water supplies do not require replacement.

**Comment:** This option is a tried and trusted approach to the provision of modular accommodation. It is based around 'classroom' sizes, and as a result the actual dimensions of the unit provided will be determined by standard units of the manufacturer. With suitable phasing with the maintenance works, it should be possible to provide the 'modular' element by the end of April 2017.

### **Option 3: Traditional Build**

**Description of Works:** A traditionally built 150m<sup>2</sup> structure that will meet the requirements of 'Visions'.

**Planning Issues:** This option would provide an asset that is designed specifically for the location within the conservation area. Consideration would need to be given to the massing, finishes, orientation, and its impact on the surrounding area.

#### **Programme:**

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
1	RCC approval & instruction	RCC		20.09.16
2	Complete concept design (RIBA stage 2)	Designer	3 weeks	
3	Submit planning application	Designer		11.10.16 <sup>1</sup>
4	Planning decision process	RCC	10 weeks	
5	Planning decision	RCC		20.12.16
6	Developed design & technical design (RIBA stages 3 & 4)	Designer	5 weeks from 11.10.16	15.11.16
7	Building Regulations	RCC	ongoing	
8	Procurement internal process	RCC	2 weeks	29.11.16
9	Out to tender	Designer		02.12.16
10	Tender period	-	5 weeks <sup>2</sup>	
11	Tenders returned	-		06.01.17
12	Tender analysis & approvals	Designer/RCC	2 weeks	
13	Place order	RCC		20.01.17
14	Contractor's lead in period	Contractor	3 weeks	
15	Start on site	Contractor		13.02.17

16	Construction phase (RIBA stage 5)	Contractor	16 weeks <sup>3</sup>	02.06.17
17	Handover	Contractor		02.06.17

Assumes no requirement for specialist reports of trees, ecology, etc

<sup>2</sup> Allowance for Christmas period

<sup>3</sup> Absolute minimum construction period and assumes no abnormal ground conditions; no prolonged material delivery periods; that the existing mains incoming electrical and water supplies do not require replacement.

**Comment:** Based on the above programme this option could not be delivered by the required date of April 2017.

#### **Option 4: Combined Library and Children's Centre**

Following consultation with the stakeholders in order to develop the Children's Centre requirements, integration of the Children's Centre within Oakham Library's existing footprint is unlikely to be successful. The existing site footprint simply does not offer enough floor area to successfully accommodate both the library's requirements and the Children's Centre's needs.

If the Children's Centre was integrated within the Library, both of the services would be negatively impacted, as they would not have enough floor area to deliver their respective services.

3.3 A full break down of costs are provided in exempt **Annex E** for Options 2 and 3.

#### 3.4 Recommended Option

Having considered all options and having due regard to the timing of project delivery it is recommended that we progress with Option 2, modular build, due to costs and efficiency of the programme.

### **4. PROCUREMENT ROUTE**

4.1 Selection of the procurement route will be largely dependent upon the option selected. It is likely that a number of different services will also need to be procured – e.g. designers, geotechnical surveys, topographical surveys etc.

4.2 Procurement will follow existing procurement rules and for the larger elements is likely to be via an existing 'Framework' or through a Two Stage (Restricted) tender. This will be decided when the preferred option is identified. However as works must commence immediately in order to achieve the April deadline, approval is sought to appoint a Lead Designer directly.

### **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 Internal consultation has taken place amongst officers and cabinet members to explore the most appropriate route to address the provision of additional spaces.

- 5.2 It is a statutory requirement to consult on the opening or closure of a Children's Centre. This process was started in January 2016 with a letter to all colleagues, parents and partners. We will ensure further engagement and consultation to enable the wishes of our users and partners to be considered.

## **6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1 All Options are considered in greater detail in Paragraph 3.2. Consideration has been given to the 'do-nothing' option.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The relocation of the Children's Centre project was not in the capital programme approved by Council as part of the budget. However, various sources of unallocated funding were being held by the Council which could be used to support this project. Equally, the Council could choose to borrow to fund this project.

Currently these works, irrespective of which option is chosen, are not included within the Councils Medium Financial Plan (MFTP) and therefore no funding is allocated to this project. In addition and as mentioned earlier in the report there is a requirement to reinvest the sum of £317k (as originally provided by the Department for Education) into any new development.

The Council holds Basic Needs funding which is given by the DfE for local authorities to fulfil their duty to make sure there are enough school places for children in their local area.

As the report indicates in para 2.2 one of the key benefits is that (150 square metres) vacated by 'the Children Centre' will be converted into school space. This will release space elsewhere within the school for teaching purposes. On this basis, it is suggested that funding earmarked for this purpose (i.e. Basic Needs funding) is used for this project rather than using other sources which are not earmarked for specific purposes e.g. Oakham North Agreement and Capital Receipts. This will give the Council maximum freedom moving forward.

The Library project is included in the revised capital programme at £220k funded by the Oakham North agreement. It is recommended to fund the additional £60k being requested from these funds.

## **8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 It is proposed that Cabinet delegate authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Places (Development and Economy) and the Director for Resources to award the contract to whoever meets the approved criteria and demonstrates best value for money for the authority. This approach will minimise delay between the receipt and tenders and award of the contract
- 8.2 The Council's Contract Procurement Rules have been complied with in determining the award criteria for this procurement exercise. This contract opportunity is below the EU threshold for works contracts, therefore Part 4 Chapter 8, 'Below Threshold

Procurement' of the Public Contract Regulations will be complied with. Rutland County Council's Procurement Rules require that Cabinet authorises the award criteria used for all contracts over £50,000 so the only option would be to seek a contract exemption which is not justifiable in these circumstances.

- 8.3 Cabinet are allowed, in line with Para 5.7 of Finance Procedure Rules, to add a scheme to the capital programme using funds set out in the original budget.

## **9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 At a suitable time in the development process an EIA will be completed.

## **10. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no community safety implications

## **11 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The completion of these works will ensure that this asset remains capable of delivering a high quality service to the People of Rutland for the next 25 years.

## **12. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 Environmental implications

Addressing the maintenance issues at Oakham Library, including the removal of asbestos materials, will have a positive environmental impact

- 12.2 Human Resource implications

The library will be closed for the period of the refurbishment and the service will be provided in the museum. Staff will be reallocated to support this provision and the hours extended to minimise disruption.

- 12.3 Procurement Implications

These have been covered under section 3.

## **13. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1 If agreed the recommendations set out in this report will allow the combined project to move forward and lead to the provision of additional teaching space at Catmose College, and Library and Children's Centre facilities that ensure service delivery for the next 25 years.

## **14 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 14.1 Cabinet Report 122/2016 dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016 – Oakham Library Essential Works.

## **15 APPENDICES**

- 15.1 Annex A – Map of Rutland
- 15.2 Annex B – Children’s Centre Usage
- 15.3 Annex C – Basic Requirement
- 15.4 Annex D – Proposed Plan
- 15.5 Exempt Annex E

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.