

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**7 February 2017**

**Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services**

**Gosforth Youth Centre**

**1. Purpose of Report**

To seek Cabinet Member approval to declare Gosforth Youth Centre surplus to Children's Services' operational requirements.

**2. Information and Analysis**

Following a series of stakeholder engagement meetings, the Youth Buildings Cabinet report dated 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 recommended that Gosforth Youth Centre is transferred to the Gosforth Pre-School, a registered charity, via a Community Asset Transfer (CAT).

Youth services ceased using the building in May 2015 and have relocated services and resources, meaning that the Youth Centre is no longer used by the Council to deliver services.

Gosforth Pre-School is the tenant in the building and is hoping to acquire the building by way of a CAT. Work on the CAT has been progressing slowly and is being project-managed by Corporate Landlord. A pre-emption clause on the building gives Stubley Medical Practice first refusal if DCC wish to dispose of the land. Discussions with the Medical Practice has delayed progressing the CAT and the Director of Property has been asked to look into this. Implications on the community group will not be evident until the issue around the pre-emption clause is resolved.

**2.1 Future and Proposals**

Due to not using the centre to deliver services it is proposed to declare Youth Centre surplus to Children's Services operational requirements.

The CAT is ongoing and led by Corporate Landlord. However, the delay due to the pre-emption clause is likely to delay the process. It is also necessary for Children's Services to first declare the property as surplus

to operational requirements before Corporate Landlord can manage it and progress a CAT.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

The current cost to Children's Services for running the building is approximately £14,000 per annum.

Once declared surplus to operational requirements, the property will pass to the Corporate Landlord to manage. Children's Services will be responsible for the funding of the property for 18 months and, due to having tenants in the building, this is likely to be the full cost.

The Council no longer has any cleaning or caretaking staff in the premises. The pre-school operate on a negotiated reduced rent and are responsible for the cleaning of the building.

### **4. Human Resources Considerations**

DCC no longer has any staff based at or working from this building and therefore there are not any HR considerations.

### **5. Property Considerations**

On the assumption that the property is declared surplus to the requirements of Children's Services, Corporate Landlord will continue to progress the CAT. Should this not complete, Corporate Landlord will assess the Council's strategic need for the property to meet the wider objectives of the Council.

The property will either be retained to meet the service needs of the Council or approval will be sought to declare the property surplus to requirements.

In the event that the property is deemed suitable for an alternative use, the service that wishes to take over the use would have to have a sufficient budget large enough to run the property. Either they would take over the management of the property or Corporate Landlord could manage the property using the budget supplied by the new service. The Children's Services department would therefore retain the original running cost budget and use this as they deem most appropriate.

Should the property be deemed surplus to the requirements of the Council, the annual running costs of approximately £14,000 per annum will be saved and Corporate Landlord will seek approval to declare the building as surplus.

## **6. Social Value Considerations**

The original proposal to transfer the building by way of a CAT was to ensure that the building remained a community asset and that the pre-school could continue to be run from the premises. The Pre-School is a registered charity (Charity Number 1037815) and received an 'outstanding' in its 2013-14 OFSTED inspection.

Declaring the buildings surplus to Children's Services operational requirements will not change the intention to transfer the building by way of CAT, but will recognise the responsibility of Corporate Landlord to manage this process.

## **7. Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered – prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, legal, health, environmental and transport considerations.

## **8. Key Decision?**

No

## **9. Call-in**

Is it required that the Call-in period be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed within this report? No

## **10. Background Papers**

Available from Bish Sharif, Head of Service - Services for Teenagers.

## **11. Strategic Director's Recommendation**

That the Cabinet Member approves that Gosforth Youth Centre be declared surplus to Children's Services operational requirements.

**Jane Parfremment**  
**Strategic Director for Children's Services**