

Cabinet – 15 July 2009

Proposed combined Health Centre, Library and Children's Centre, High Street, Pelsall

Portfolio:	Councillor Sanders - Leisure & Culture Councillor Andrew - Regeneration Councillor Walker - Children's Services
Service:	Property Services/Library Services / Walsall Children's Services - SERCO
Wards:	Pelsall
Key decision:	Yes
Forward plan:	Yes

1. Summary of report

In line with Government and local aspirations, plans are being developed for a new, shared building to provide a health centre, children's centre and library for the residents of Pelsall. The Council is committed to providing a Children's Centre for Pelsall and NHS Walsall has an aspiration to deliver improved health facilities in Pelsall following a Health Needs Assessment for the area.

Pelsall has very limited opportunities for the development of these facilities. The site of the existing surgery premises and the existing library on High Street has been identified as the only suitable opportunity. As such, it is necessary to consider a new library development as part of the proposal.

In order to maximise the benefit of this partnership working, such as shared areas/services and reduced costs it is proposed to construct a single building which will accommodate a new Health Centre, Children's Centre and library. This will create a single, one stop facility for health, information, learning and child and family development for the residents of the Pelsall area.

The Council has funding from the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) to deliver a Children's Centre, which must be spent and claimed by 31 March 2011. The Council's approved Capital Programme identifies funding for the library.

NHS Walsall has agreed funding for its element of the building.

The approach being adopted, whereby the Council lead on and procure the construction of the building, is different from other similar partnership projects where the Council has ultimately taken a lease for its element of the building from the developer. This approach will enable the council to control ongoing revenue expenditure rather than being tied to an expensive lease arrangement.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. approve the acquisition of the freehold interest in the site of the existing surgery premises shown edged in blue on plan number EPMS 2346/4 from NHS Walsall for nil consideration;
2. approve the Council proceeding to construct a new combined health centre, children's centre and library on the site of the existing surgery premises referred to in Recommendation 1 above and the site of the existing library premises and adjacent car park shown edged in red on plan number EPMS 2346/4;
3. approve a budget of £600,000 from the Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Grant funded from the total capital of £1,160,045 that has been allocated to Walsall by the DCSF;
4. approve the use of delegated powers by the Executive Director for Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Leisure and Culture, Regeneration and Children's Services, to accept tenders and appoint a contractor to construct the new facilities; and
5. approve the grant of a long leasehold interest of the Health Centre element of the new building to NHS Walsall on terms to be agreed. (Such terms will be in accordance with the best consideration principles of Section 123 local Government Act 1972)

3. Background information

Following a Health Needs Assessment for Pelsall, the Walsall Teaching Primary Care Trust (now NHS Walsall) approached the Council with a view to the development of a combined Health Centre and Library on the site of the existing library site and the adjacent surgery premises in High Street, Pelsall using the LIFT Co scheme.

The Council's Libraries Modernisation Programme had proposed some refurbishment work to the existing library, but could not fund the significant improvements the building requires. In view of the significant additional ongoing revenue costs that would result from a LIFT Co scheme, the Council indicated that it could not proceed with such a scheme.

As NHS Walsall is under some pressure to deliver improved health facilities in Pelsall and recognises that, in order to achieve this, it is necessary to work with the Council, it was suggested that the Council lead on the project. It should be noted that it is necessary to work with the Council as the Council owns the existing library site and car park which are essential for the scheme to proceed.

A firm of architects was employed to carry out an options appraisal exercise which considered how the combined car park, library site and surgery premises site could potentially be developed. It transpired that, in principle and subject to planning permission, the combined sites could accommodate a new health

centre, a new library and also a Children's Centre, which the Council has agreed to deliver for Pelsall as part of the Children's Centre Programme. It is proposed that there would be one new building with various shared areas similar to existing partnership arrangements such as the Park View Centre, Brownhills and Blakenall Village Centre.

In July 2008, Cabinet approved the Phase 3 Children's Centre area locations, including the development of a centre in Pelsall. The inclusion of Children's Centre facilities within the new development represents the largest Phase 3 Centre in Walsall and represents the only option to deliver a combined scheme in Pelsall. The development of a separate Children's Centre, elsewhere within Pelsall, would lead to lost opportunities for co-located services on a centrally located site that is readily accessible to the community. In July 2008, Cabinet approved the Phase 3 Children's Centre area locations, including the development of a centre in Pelsall. The co-location of Children's Centre facilities within the new Library / Health Centre has received overwhelming political support from local members and from residents within the community.

It is recommended that funding of £600,000 is allocated from the Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Grant for the Children's Centre element of this scheme.

In order for the scheme to proceed, it is necessary firstly for NHS Walsall to acquire the existing surgery premises from the doctors. The extent of this site is shown edged in blue on plan number EPMS 2346/2. This site would be transferred from NHS Walsall to the Council for nil consideration and the Council would construct the new facility on the combined sites and grant a long lease for the relevant area of the building back to NHS Walsall. NHS Walsall would bear the cost of the construction and fit out of its element. The approximate floor space required is 1,400 square metres for the Health Centre, 220 square metres for the Children's Centre and 300 square metres for the Library.

4. Resource considerations

4.1 Financial:

£350,000 funding for the library element of the building is in place as part of the Council's Capital Programme.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families has allocated capital funding through the Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Grant (SSEYCG) to Walsall for the start up and maintenance of Children's Centres. The total SSEYCG grant funding allocation for Children's Centres is £1,160,045 across the financial years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11. This funding is being used to develop three capital schemes in Walsall. It is recommended that approximately £600,000 is assigned for this project.

The DCSF has confirmed that the Council will be able to carry forward unspent capital both from 2008-09 into 2009-10 and from 2009-10 into 2010-2011. However, the Council cannot approve carry-forward of unspent amounts beyond 2010-11. Local authorities will be expected to utilise all their capital funding by the financial year 2010-11.

NHS Walsall will fund the construction costs for the health centre element of the building.

To date, NHS Walsall has not yet received formal endorsement from the Strategic Health Authority to commit the £3 million required to deliver their element of the building.

Should NHS Walsall be unable to find the necessary funding this year it is proposed that the project would develop in two phases. The first phase would be to continue with the construction of the children's centre and library, as the children's centre funding must be fully drawn down by March 2011.

4.2 Legal:

The legal mechanism for the proposal will involve a Building Licence between the Council and NHS Walsall with an Agreement for Sale and an Agreement for Lease within that document. The Agreement will be certified as best consideration under Section 123 Local Government Act 1972

Plans will be subject to the successful submission and approval of planning permission.

4.3 Staffing:

Work on the project will continue to be carried out by officers from within Property Services, Library Services, Financial Services and Walsall Children's Services - Serco. It will be necessary to employ the appointed Lead Consultant under the Council's Construction Consultancy Contract regarding the design and development of the building and the submission of the necessary statutory approvals including Planning Application and a Conservation Area Consent Application. It is envisaged that Legal Services will deal with the necessary legal documentation.

5. Citizen impact

The combined facility will provide the citizens of Pelsall with improved library and health facilities and a new Children's Centre. It will be a single building for all three elements situated within the local centre. As such, citizens will have easy access to modern services which should improve health and learning opportunities for adults and children.

6. Community safety

The adoption of this strategy will impact positively on the safety of children, young people and their families in the communities of Walsall.

The building will be designed to offer an environment for staff and customers which is safe and secure and offers a welcoming atmosphere. The Children's Centre will offer a safe area where children can play and interact.

7. Environmental impact

The construction of a new building will significantly enhance the appearance of the whole site. The development is envisaged to be one of high quality using traditional materials in keeping with the required character and appearance of a Conservation Area.

The DCSF expect Children's Centre schemes to achieve at least a very good rating using the BREEAM Schools Methodology.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk:

The risks of the project will be identified and managed through the Council's Project Management Methodology (Walsall Project Approach). The Council has already approved the funding for the Library element in the Capital Programme. There remains a risk that, without approval to proceed and incur expenditure, the timescales for grant funding will not be met, resulting in the loss of grant.

As yet, NHS Walsall have not received approval from the Strategic Health Authority to commit the £3 million required to deliver their element of the building. Should they be unable to commit the necessary funding at this time, it is proposed that the project develop in 2 phases, the first being to continue with the construction of the children's centre and library.

Further, NHS Walsall may not be successful in the purchase of the surgery site or reach satisfactory agreement with all of the existing General Practitioners.

8.2 Performance management:

There are specific criteria established by the Government's Sure Start Unit for the project management of children's centres. A strategic approach is being established by the Local Authority that responds to and builds upon the resources currently available.

The risks associated with construction programmes, such as issues like inclement weather, unforeseen ground conditions and changes in general market conditions, might affect the timescales and cost of projects that in turn require adjustments to the programme. These risks are and will be managed as far as is practicable on an ongoing basis.

Experience from the Library Modernisation Plan has demonstrated that the provision of a new or enhanced library facility results in increased use and community engagement. It is anticipated that the number of customer visits to a new Pelsall Library would increase by 40% in the first year. It is also anticipated that customer satisfaction with the service would improve.

9. Equality implications

The building will be designed to offer open and easy access to services and facilities for every member of the local community.

The adoption of this development will impact directly on the learning, health and social care of children, young people and their families in Walsall. There is a focus on identified vulnerable groups and areas of recognised disadvantage.

10. Consultation

Library Services have been consulted and have identified the need to expand and modernise the library services currently available in the existing cramped and dated building through the Library Modernisation Plan. It has also identified the benefits of a shared building by using common areas for reception, meetings, activities and other joint opportunities.

Walsall Children's Services - SERCO have been consulted and have advised that the Children's Area Partnership (CAP) will guide and shape the development of children's centre services in Pelsall. Development through the CAP will also enable key stakeholders to be consulted. Planning Guidance for Phase 3 Children's Centres makes specific reference for the need to consult with the private, voluntary and independent sectors. This has been facilitated through independent consultation processes. Walsall Children's Services – SERCO has supported the CAP during the development with appropriate tools and resources to meet the need to consult with children and families when planning service delivery.

Pelsall and Rushall LNP have been consulted and will continue to be kept informed of progress with the project. The LNP is keen to see the development of this combined facility.

Background papers

Report to Cabinet 16 April 2008 Phase 3 Children's Centre programme 2008 to 2010
Report to Cabinet 16 July 2008 Phase 3 Children's Centre locations and funding

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Jamie Morris
Executive Director
7 July 2009



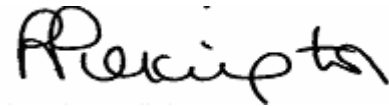
Councillor Barry Sanders
Portfolio Holder
7 July 2009

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Tim Johnson
Executive Director
7 July 2009

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Councillor Adrian Andrew
Portfolio Holder
7 July 2009

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Pauline Pilkington
Acting Executive Director
for Children's Services
7 July 2009

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Walker', followed by a period.

Councillor Rachel Walker
Portfolio Holder
7 July 2009



Walsall Council

Little Common

AREA EDGED RED = 2,673 SQ METRES (OR THEREABOUTS)

Pelsall Common

141.1m

141.7m

142.0m

OLD TOWN LANE

PELSFORD ROAD

TOWNFOLD

Clinic

El Sub Sta

Library

Hall

Mayou Court

HIGH STREET

PO

53

51a

51

47

Bank

41

39

38

Norton House

22

1

James House

STACK

29

24

12

14

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DRAWING NO : EPMS 2346/4
DATE : 22/06/2009
DRAWN BY : KCL



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