

Cabinet – 14 April 2010

Procurement of Children's short break centre

Portfolio: Councillor Walker, Children's services

Service: Children's Services

Wards: Pleck

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary of report

On 23 February 2009, Cabinet approved a £1.028m budget for the replacement of Eldon House children's short break centre. Eldon House is located in Chuckery providing short term break care for children with disabilities and provides respite accommodation, care and support for children and young people aged between 5 & 18 years old. It has the capacity to look after 9 children per night and provides day care during school holidays.

The current accommodation is inadequate and will not continue to meet Ofsted requirements. A number of sites have been considered for the replacement centre and this has concluded in a co-location opportunity with the new Healthtec facility at Alumwell Secondary school. It is proposed to integrate the design proposals with the Healthtec facility which requires that an integrated procurement approach is also follows

On 21 October Cabinet approved the procurement of the Healthtec facility using the fully EU compliant SCAPE framework to deliver the design and construction works. This report requests that Cabinet approves the inclusion of the procurement of the respite care facility in the Healthtec project and let as a single contract.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet member for Regeneration, for the appointment of Willmott Dixon through the SCAPE framework as part of the collocation with the Healthtec project, to construct the replacement children's short break centre subject to the overall cost of the project not exceeding £1.028 million and DCSF approval, if necessary, for land disposal being granted

3. Background information

- 3.1 The current short break centre at Eldon House is not capable of adaptation to provide a facility to meet Ofsted standards. A number of site options for replacement have been considered, this includes rebuilding on the current site whilst decanting the children and rebuilding independently at a number of other Council owned sites. During this options appraisal process a key opportunity has been identified to co-locate the facility with the new Healthtec facility being created at Alumwell school
- 3.2 This co-location opportunity will enable shared benefits from both facilities sharing resources and facilities for mutual benefit. However, the facility will need careful design to ensure appropriate separation where necessary
- 3.3 The location of the new facility may require DCSF approval for construction on a school site; discussions are currently taking place with the DCSF.
- 3.4 The further use of the SCAPE framework will enable significant time savings and the benefits of good practice and lessons learned to be passed onto this further project. Benefits include maximising the use of a local supply chain, market testing work packages to achieve value for money and maintaining a successful delivery team.
- 3.5 The Healthtec project needs to be completed by August 2011, and the short break facility will need to coordinate with this programme.
- 3.6 A 'gateway review' will take place during the pre-construction design period to ensure that the project can be delivered in accordance with Walsall Council's policies, procedures and as per the project brief, prior to the order being placed with Willmott Dixon. This will also ensure that:
- The budget amount of £1.028m will be maintained and not exceeded (this includes design fees and 5% contingency).
 - The programme dates can be achieved
 - A risk register is in place to ensure that current issues and liabilities have been identified and either mitigated or managed.

4. Resource considerations

- 4.1 **Financial:** A total budget of £1.028m has been approved by cabinet; this includes all design fees, surveys, fixtures, furniture, equipment and contingency.
- 4.2 **Legal:** The Council signed the access agreement to use the fully EU compliant SCAPE framework in 2006. Legal Services will be consulted in the signing of the contract for the execution of the works
- 4.3 **Staffing:** Property Services will be managing the project on behalf of the Council working closely with Walsall Children's Services Serco Asset Management team for the Healthtec project.

5. Citizen impact

The re-provision of the short break centre will contribute to improved services for disabled children and provide significant benefits in co-locating with the Healthtec facility

6. Community safety

The co-location of the facility on a school campus and with the Healthtec will enhance the campus at Alumwell school and the learning opportunities for young people making use of the Healthtec facilities

7. Environmental impact

7.1 As part of the Council's Carbon management planning all new buildings will aim to significantly reduce carbon emissions. A BREEAM (British research establishment environmental assessment method) will be included aiming to achieve an excellent rating

7.2 The development plan for Alumwell school is being developed as part of the Transforming learning programme. The short break centre will be significant enhancement of the campus enabling the provision of a range of community facilities and learning opportunities

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk:

The key project risk will be the approval from DCSF of land disposal, if this is required. Until this approval is obtained then no orders can be placed

The Healthtec needs to be completed by August 2011; the short break centre design development is required to be delivered in a timely manner to enable the Healthtec to be delivered on programme

8.2 Performance management:

The project development will include 'gateway reviews at key stages to ensure that the project objectives are being met

9. Equality implications

The new building will significantly improve access standards and will assist the service area to meet the needs of disabled children and the equality dimensions of the national minimum standards for children's homes

10. Consultation

Consultation with various stakeholders has taken place (School, Walsall Childrens Services Serco, Planning and Building Control) and all have given their support and backing to the proposals set out within the Plan.


Background papers

None

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Date: 31 March 2010