

CABINET

22 APRIL 2003

MULTI DISCIPLINARY CENTRE – POCKLINGTONS WALK

Report of the Corporate Director of Housing

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report is concerned with the creation of a new, innovative centre for homeless people and seeks guidance from Cabinet on whether and how this scheme should proceed.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Single Homeless Strategy approved by Housing Committee on 7 June 1999 sets out the particular support needs of rough sleepers and other vulnerable single homeless people and indicates how the Council is working with other agencies, including Health, Police, Probation, and the voluntary sector to achieve this. One of the proposals in that report was for a single centre, in a central location, where accommodation, primary health, community psychiatric nurses, psychology, daycentre education and advice services could provide an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach.
- 2.2 The current arrangements provide for the operation of services in separate and remote locations. The City Council provides crisis accommodation through the Nightshelter on New Walk, and grant aids the YMCA to provide day centre services in a separate location on Pocklingtons Walk. Health services operate on a sessional basis across both locations whilst basic skills training and other educational activities occur only at the day centre. This means that vulnerable and often disorientated or addicted clients are faced with moving locations to receive services. Given the problems facing this client group, many are unsuccessful in reaching their intended destination, being drawn elsewhere instead. Many of the users within this client group have contact with or are otherwise engaged with most or all of the services identified, meaning that in practice a holistic, integrated service is required.
- 2.3 Agencies are currently attempting to work as a “virtual team” and have established case management and liaison structures to assist the process. Nevertheless, constraints exist around communication, organisation and co-ordinating case management activities given the disparate nature of the location of these services.
- 2.4 The proposals in this report enable services to be located in one setting enabling focused and targeted approaches to be adopted. Services to be located at the Multi-Disciplinary Centre include the Nightshelter, Y Advice and Support Day Centre, Homeless Primary Health Team, Homeless Community

Psychiatric Nurses, Homeless Psychologists. Access to chiropody and dentistry will be available on a sessional basis within the complex.

- 2.5 Educational and life skills training will be a prominent feature of the re-provisioned approach.
- 2.6 Development Control Sub-Committee considered an application for planning permission initially on 5 November 2002 then again on 4 February 2003 and finally on 4 March 2003 when the application was refused by Members. The issue was then reconsidered by the Regulatory Committee at a meeting on the 2 April 2003 who approved the planning application.
- 2.7 In addition, the Housing Scrutiny Committee has considered the issue as a result of a petition and resolved that it supported the scheme and felt that Pocklington's Walk was an appropriate site for the new facility.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Following the project being given Planning approved by the Regulatory Committee on the 2 April 2003, it is recommended that:

- (i) The scheme be added to the Housing Capital Programme 2003/04 and 2004/05;
- (ii) When the new facility is complete, the Nightshelter is closed and sold with the capital receipt being used to offset the purchase/refurbishment costs of the new facility on Pocklington's Walk.
- (iii) The Corporate Director of Housing be given delegated powers to –
- a) appoint a Project Manager to implement the scheme
 - b) agree and authorise capital expenditure for the scheme
 - c) dispose of the existing Nightshelter upon completion of the scheme
- (iv) The Town Clerk be delegated authority to sign any contacts etc. in connection with the scheme.

4. Financial and Legal Implications

4.1 The cost of the scheme has been estimated at £1.758m for which £1.598m has been secured with the balance coming from the 2004/05 Housing Capital Programme. A breakdown of the costs and resources is shown below for Members information.

<u>Costs</u>	000's
Purchase (see below)	975
Refurbishment including fees and contingency	<u>783</u>
	1,758
<u>Resources</u>	
Night Shelter Reserves	199
Various Donations (already acquired)	170
Night Shelter Sale	475
Government's Rough Sleepers Unit	750
Housing Capital Programme 2004/05	<u>164</u>
	1,758

- 4.2 The costs of running the new premises will be similar to those currently borne by the Council and other agencies, and so there will be no revenue budget impact.
- 4.3 Some running costs will be higher and can be included in charges covered by Housing Benefits, and by charges made to other users of the property.
- 4.4 The cost of a Project Manager has been estimated at £40,000 and included in the above capital cost.
- 4.5 Should the Project proceed the Council's "other services Capital Programme" will benefit from a Capital Receipts of £975,000 from the sale of 1 – 9 Pocklingtons Walk.

DECISION STATUS

Key Decision	Yes
Reason	Capital expenditure of over £1 million
Appeared in Forward Plan	Yes
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

- 1.1 The background is the City Council's Single Homeless Strategy, adopted June 1999. This highlighted the need for a planned and integrated client-centred service in one place. The Strategy is endorsed by all agencies involved in implementing the strategy: The City Council (Housing Department and Social Care and Health Department), Health Trusts, Health Authority, Probation Service, Police and the Benefits Agency.
- 1.2 The goal of the centre is to create a range of opportunities for homeless people and to achieve positive life changes. This should enable individuals to stabilise and integrate with the local community. The overall concept is the provision of health, housing, social services, education and benefits provision under one roof. A voluntary sector run drop-in centre will widen services to include literacy skills training, cookery, budgeting and money management, fitness training, relaxation, arts and drama, how to manage a tenancy, and being a good neighbour.
- 1.3 Facilities that at present are distributed throughout the City will be concentrated under one roof. This will also allow for their expansion and improvement. The emphasis is on rehabilitation, with the aim of reducing the number of homeless people present on the streets, not only at night but also during the day. The Centre will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

2. Present Arrangements

- Accommodation is provided in the Night Shelter (currently 35-50 bedspaces) on New Walk and the Day Centre at 9 Pocklingtons Walk.
- Health care is provided by full time GP and nurse on a drop-in basis at both premises; community psychiatric and psychology nurses work on the same basis

Recent assessments conclude that the present Night Shelter accommodation is unsuitable for long-term use and substantial expenditure will be required to bring it up to modern day standards. Even then, the building will not meet disability standards because of the physical constraints of the property. Therefore alternative accommodation must be found if the service is to meet the needs of its clientele.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposals in this report will enable services to be located in one setting thereby allowing focused and targeted approaches to be adopted. Services will be located at the Multi-Disciplinary Centre include the Nightshelter, Y Advice and Support Day Centre, Homeless Primary Health Team, Homeless Community Psychiatric Nurses, Homeless Psychologists. Access to chiropody and dentistry will be available on a sessional basis within the complex.
- 3.2 Educational and life skills training will be a prominent feature of the re-provisioned approach.
- 3.3 The premises to be used for the new centre are at 1-9 Pocklingtons Walk. The site comprises the former Careers Office at 1 Pocklingtons Walk, the Registry Office at 3-7 Pocklingtons Walk however this service is due to move in December 2003, and the Y Centre at 9 Pocklingtons Walk. No. 1 has been empty for about three years. No. 9 offers medical and social facilities to homeless people.

4. Proposed Staffing and Management Arrangements

- A Project Board will run the scheme, consisting of representatives from the NHS, Leicestershire Strategic Health Authority, Probation Service, City Council (Housing and Social Care and Health), Police, Benefits Agency, town Centre Manager, Y Advice and Support Centre.
- A steering group will be established, including the Council's Principal Hostels Manager, Salvation Army, local business representatives, Health Services, Education, Outreach Team, Y Advice and Support Centre, and REACH (part of education)
- The on-site Hostel Manager will report to the Principal Hostels Manager.
- Staff will consist of a Hostel Manager, 2 Assistant Managers, 10 Duty Officers, 3 Night Workers, 3 Outreach/Contact Assessment Workers, and a domestic team working under a housekeeper.
- Staff would be on a shift basis providing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week cover. A minimum of 2 Duty Officers will be present around the clock, with night workers and support staff giving additional presence
- A call-out system would be in place for emergencies, ensuring out-of-hours access to a senior manager.
- Night Workers will provide security with regular patrols and will also deal with health, safety and welfare issues
- The range of facilities and 24-hour use of the premises will enable users to stay off the streets during the day.
- Users will only access the building off Pocklington's Walk; the door will be operated by staff, with CCTV monitoring and an internal radio system; all other

doors are for emergency exit, staff access or the servicing of the building.

- All users of the hostel will have to sign an agreement setting out terms of occupation, including rules on behaviour in and close to the premises, which shall include rules relating to substance abuse and harassment
- A 'modifying behaviour' policy will continue to be used.
- Alcohol will not be allowed to be consumed on the premises; a wet room is provided for those who arrive at the premises intoxicated, which gets them off the street – this facility is not available at the present Night Shelter and does not involve the relocation of the present Wet Day Centre to this site.
- Problems with street drinkers congregating outside the premises will be reported to the police
- The Council's existing complaints procedure will be used if there are complaints about the project.
- Care of Dogs

The two kennels will be provided at the centre of the building, in an enclosed yard so that any noise will be contained within the building. Direct access is provided off Rupert Street, with staff controlling access with the help of CCTV. Cleaning of the area will be simple, with waste washing to an existing foul drain. Users with a dog will also have to sign a Dog Licence Agreement. The RSPCA is in support of the scheme. At the existing Night Shelter there has never been more than 3 dogs on site in a 12-month period.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 From the above, Members will see that the scheme has a lot of support from the various agencies involved with supporting homeless people and a lot of thought has gone in to the project. In addition, the current Night Shelter on New Walk is now in need of a major upgrade and even then, would not meet the needs of its clientele particularly around disability standards. The proposed project has the full support of the Government's Rough Sleepers Unit, and in fact, has successfully won a £750k capital allocation from the Unit to support the scheme. The project is innovative and will assist the Council in achieving one of its Public Service Agreement targets.
- 5.2 Following the scheme receiving Planning approval at the Regulatory Committee meeting on the 2 April 2003, Cabinet are recommended to agree the following:
- (i) The scheme be added to the Housing Capital Programme 2003/04, with some costs falling in 2004/05;
 - (ii) When the new facility is complete, the Nightshelter is closed and sold with the capital receipt being used to offset the purchase/refurbishment costs.
 - (iii) The Corporate Director of Housing be awarded delegated powers to-
 - appoint a Project Manager to implement the scheme.

- agree and authorise capital expenditure (within the limits set out in Financial Regulations) for the scheme.
 - dispose of the existing Nightshelter upon completion of the scheme
- (v) The Town Clerk be delegated authority to sign any contacts etc. in connection with the scheme.

6. Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and, who have a priority need. Over 34% of current Nightshelter residents are owed a Statutory duty by the Council.

7. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting info.
Equal Opportunities	✓	2 and 5.1
Policy	✓	3
Sustainable and Environmental	✓	4
Crime and Disorder	✓	4
Human Rights Act	✓	2 and 5
Elderly People/People on Low Income	✓	1.2 and 6

8. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

- Reports to Development Control Sub-Committee 4 February 2003 and 4 March 2003
- Report to Housing Scrutiny Committee – petition to Council – New Nightshelter 3 April 2003.
- Background papers held in the Housing Department.

9. Consultations

None in the production of this report however, Planning Officers consulted widely as required by planning procedures and recommended approval of the planning application for Pocklingtons Walk.

10. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the housing Services is ***“a decent home within the reach of every citizen in Leicester”***.

This report contributes to that aim through objectives No. 4 ***“To enable all the citizens of Leicester to find and retain a home which suits their needs”***.

Specifically in relation to:

“preventing increases and reoccurring homelessness”

and

“Providing a multi-disciplinary approach to assist and act on the needs of single homeless”

11. Report Author

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