

Executive Decision Report

Additional School Places – Primary School Expansion: Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor

Decision to be taken on: 4 July 2018

Lead director: Paul Tinsley / Matt Wallace



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: 1.0

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the release of capital funding for the construction phase of works for the relocation of the Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) from Thurnby Lodge to the previous site of Netherhall School.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To release funding totalling £2.657m from the capital programme policy provision to fund the proposed works to the extension and re-modelling the Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at Netherhall School.

3. Background

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide education to pupils who are permanently excluded from school. The primary PRU provides this facility but also supports those children who are at risk of permanent exclusion without being provided support at the PRU. With the growing population across Leicester, there is an increasing demand for school places to meet a range of special needs and disabilities, including for those with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- 3.2 Admission to the primary PRU is through the Social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) primary service, which acts as a moderation panel to ensure the appropriateness of referrals. This service also supports primary schools in making appropriate provision for pupils with SEMH needs within mainstream settings. The service is currently paid for through de-delegation of high needs funding. It is expected that, with the introduction of the Government's new funding mechanism for schools, this will no longer be possible in the future. The SEMH team are highly valued by primary schools and have played a key role in sustaining the low number of permanent exclusions in Leicester.
- 3.3 The Primary PRU is presently occupying 27 (15 full time equivalent), with a waiting list for 3 pupils. The Primary PRU is currently unable to accommodate any additional pupils at this point, even though there is a demand from schools across the city.

- 3.4 The option of providing temporary accommodation has been considered, given the constraints of the existing PRU facilities. The majority of pupils (around 80%) referred to the Primary PRU are subsequently allocated an Education Health and Care Plan before moving on to a permanent setting better suited to meet their individual learning needs. The work undertaken in the PRU therefore seeks to avoid the potentially destructive permanent exclusion of children at such a young age and offer support to pupils and the referring schools.
- 3.5 The Primary PRU works closely with the LA's SEND Support teams (SEMH teams and Educational Psychology). The Primary Alternative Provision (PRU) was previously located on 2 sites – The Phoenix which was based at Thurnby Lodge Primary School and the ARC based at Holy Cross Primary School. The Phoenix was mainly for Key Stage 2 children and the Arc mainly for Key Stage 1. The two units have now been consolidated onto a single site, the Phoenix PRU at Thurnby Lodge Primary School. The current accommodation is not sufficient to meet demand and therefore a possible relocation site was identified (this is the vacant former Netherhall special school site which served children and adults with significant learning and physical difficulties).
- 3.6 The pupils within the PRU are some of the most vulnerable pupils and currently their premises are not fit for purpose and not specifically designed for them. The pupils may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways including becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour.
- 3.7 These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder.
- 3.8 Pupils who have these needs often require extra space to move around and to ensure a comfortable distance between themselves and others. They may need to be able to withdraw from their group. Some may take extreme risks or have outbursts and need a safe place to calm down. Others may need behaviour support or counselling which should take place in a quiet supportive environment.
- 3.9 Significant investment has already been delivered in secondary and special schools via BSF and in primary schools through the primary capital programme. A good quality learning environment must be delivered to this vulnerable group of pupils. Therefore, investment is required into the existing school estate.

4. Development of Primary PRU Accommodation at Nether Hall site

- 4.1 A feasibility study has been undertaken which offered a solution to accommodate the existing pupils on roll and also an additional six places.
- 4.2 In 2017-18 the PRU piloted a traded offer for schools. The target group of pupils were those who are known to the SEMH team, but who do not necessarily exhibit the extent of challenging behaviour that would warrant a place at the PRU. They may be in a nurture group within school, but even within this

environment are struggling to access learning. There is no provision in the city currently which supports children with these needs, apart from an alternative provision such as Goldhill.

- 4.3 An architectural solution that affords the development of the traded offer would be preferred. This strengthens the range of support available to pupils with SEMH needs across the city. It also provides a flexible approach which is more likely to meet the needs of children in Leicester City. The additional group would be accommodated in the PRU building but would run on a traded basis with the PRU funding the running costs through “selling” the places to referring schools.

5. Provision of TMB at Nether Hall site

- 5.1 The Primary PRU was originally on two sites (The ARC and The Phoenix). In order to reduce costs and improve staffing ratios The ARC site was closed (it was on the grounds of the primary school).
- 5.2 The Key Stage 1 provision was in The ARC. Moving the PRU to be on one site (The Phoenix) reduced the capacity of the PRU to take KS1 Children.
- 5.3 The provision of a TMB would allow the KS1 provision to be reinstated. The TMB would only be necessary until the new permanent site is opened.
- 5.4 Due to the nature of the PRU’s admissions (that is they build up over the year – especially the autumn term) the TMB would not be needed urgently. It could be in place by the start of the Spring term (January 2019).

6. Proposed Works

- 6.1 In order to determine the works required at the Netherhall site, an area modelling exercise has been undertaken to determine the requirements for the PRU in line with the are guidance provided in Building Bulletin 104 (BB104). This area modelling exercise calculated that a total net area of 653m², non-net area of 305m² and additional accommodation area of 194m² is required to accommodate the maximum number or 40 pupils. This represents approximately 75% of the area available at Netherhall and it can therefore be demonstrated that the site can comfortably accommodate the requirements of the PRU.
- 6.2 In order to accommodate the specialist requirements of the PRU there is an element of remodelling required to the internal accommodation, and there are further condition based issues requiring attention for the buildings to be brought back into use. Additionally, external areas and landscaping require upgrading to current standards. Works required are outlined below:
 - External Works
 - Resurfacing and line marking to the existing car park
 - Development of a segregated pedestrian access route for safety reasons
 - Clearance and landscaping to external grassed areas

- Repair and replacement of existing hard landscaping and provision of new external play spaces
- Building and Refurbishment Works
 - Extension/Infill to Main entrance to create a secure lobby and waiting areas
 - Repairs to roof coverings subject to a full condition survey of the roof areas. There is evidence of water ingress internally.
 - Replacement of remaining timber windows and doors on the site with new powder coated aluminium units
 - Rectification of existing damp issues
 - Full internal upgrade and refurbishment to include new floor finishes, decoration, ceilings and fixed furniture
 - Remodelling of internal spaces to suit the needs of the PRU
 - Provision of FF&E
 - Formation of Kitchen servery and catering equipment
 - Specialist PRU break out pod
- Mechanical and Electrical Works
 - Upgrade of existing hot and cold water systems to comply with current regulations
 - Complete renewal of the building heating system to suit the new building use and layout
 - Installation of new Building management System (BMS)
 - Upgrade of building ventilation systems
 - Relocation and upgrading of electrical distribution boards to suit the new layouts
 - Rationalisation and re-wiring of small power installations and containment to suit the new layouts
 - Upgrade of the existing data installation
 - Replacement of the existing outdated lighting installation with new energy efficient LED alternatives, including renewal of the emergency lighting systems
 - Replacement and upgrade of external halogen flood lighting with energy efficient LED alternatives
 - Alteration and testing of the existing fire alarm system to suit new layouts
 - Installation of new security alarm installation, upgrade of CCTV and access control systems in line with revised layouts

7. Risks and Issues

7.1 This section identifies key risks and the risk management procedures in place.

7.2 The main risks are as follows:

Risk Description	Overall	Risk Owner	Risk/Mitigation Actions
Increase to cost and programme as a result of the discovery of unidentified asbestos		LCC	Undertake a full demolition and refurbishment survey of the site and buildings
Unforeseen major services diversions		LCC	Undertake full underground drainage and services survey to determine condition and location of services and drainage routes
Contaminated Ground		LCC	Undertake ground investigations to areas requiring external works
Planning Permission		LCC	Early engagement with planners regarding the vehicle movements and new entrance infill/extension
Environmental matters (Bats, Badgers, invasive species etc.)		LCC	Undertake full range of environmental and ecological surveys to the site

8. Analysis of Cost

8.1 On the basis of the feasibility study, an estimated Project cost of **£2,657,296**, has been established, which is set out as follows:

Main Works Project	Cost (£)
Entrance Extension	£90,279
Remodelling works (including M&E)	£1,319,719
Kitchen, food prep & safespace pod room	£69,300
External Site Works	£292,835
Contractor Preliminaries	£212,656
Total Building Works Cost	£1,984,789
Professional Fees	£198,479
Specialist Surveys, Investigations & Additional Fees	£109,163
Risk Allowances; Design & Construction Contingency	£114,622
Inflation	£28,885
Client Contingency	£72,212
Total Project Cost	£2,508,150

TMB Works	Cost (£)
Temporary modular building	£54,600
One-off costs	£29,484
External works	£8,202
Utilities	£8,485
Other installations and connections	£811
Contractor Preliminaries	£12,190
Contractor Overheads & Profits	£8,533
Total Building Works Cost	£122,305
Professional Fees	£12,230
Specialist Surveys, Investigations & Additional Fees	£6,727
Risk Allowances; Design & Construction Contingency	£6,115
Inflation	£1,769
Total Project Cost	£149,146

9. Decision Required

9.1 Approval is required of the following capital funding:

• Main Works Project and associated fees	£	2,508,150
• TMB Works and associated fees	£	149,146
Total capital funding.....	£	2,657,296

10. Next Steps

10.1 The next steps are:

- Works to be full specified and priced via the most appropriate procurement route, ensuring best value for money.
- Mobilise team to secure PRU TMB building through an appropriate procurement route.
- Complete TMB and Permanent works to provide PRU pupil places in line with pupil place projections for the city.

11. Details of Scrutiny

The Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission received a presentation on the proposed capital works programme to meet the latest projections for Pupil Place demand at its meeting on 5 December 2017.

12. Financial, legal and other implications

12.1 Financial implications

£2.657m of funding is being requested for release from the Education & Children's Policy Provision for the relocation of the Pupil Referral Unit to the former Netherhall School site.

There is a remaining 2017/18 Education & Children's Services capital policy provision of £5.3m (reducing to £3.576m, should the St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School Executive Decision be approved ahead of this report), which the requested amount can be released from before requiring any release of the new policy provision in the 2018/19 capital programme.

Simon Walton, Accountant (Education & Children's Services Finance)

12.2 Legal implications

1. The Capital Programme approved by Full Council contains "policy provision" of circa £61m for the creation of "new school places". Presumably the expenditure for the building of the new Primary PRU will come from this pot of money. Policy Provisions require a further Executive Decision, and this Decision is rightly identified as being "Key" due to its value therefore it must be appropriately flagged on the Plan of Key Decisions. The published Capital Programme report at paragraph 9.2 state "*Executive reports seeking approval to spend policy provisions must state whether schemes, once approved, will constitute projects, work programmes or provisions; and, in the case of projects, identify project outcomes and physical milestones against which progress can be monitored*" so this will need to be covered.
2. The Council is statutorily obliged to "*make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them*" [Section 19 Education Act 1996). Where this "provision" is not in a "community or foundation school, or a community or foundation special school" then it is delivered via a PRU. There are a large number of triggers for a pupil to require educational provision in a PRU including after a period of fixed term or permanent exclusion, or (short of exclusion) under the direction of the school where behaviour is an issue.

Kamal Adatia, City Barrister & Head of Standards, ext. 37 1401

12.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

The proposed works at the Netherhall School site will improve the energy performance

of the building and this will help to achieve the council's corporate target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 50% by 2025/26.

Mark Jeffcote, Environment Team ext. 37 2251

12.4 Equalities Implications

The proposed works to the extension and re-modelling of the Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at Netherhall School has the potential to have a positive impact on pupils from all protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Schools Governing Bodies have a statutory responsibility to develop an Accessibility Plan for improving physical accessibility to the school and ensuring it is fit for purpose during and at the completion of the works outlined in the proposal.

Another consideration is ensuring that the council's inclusive design standards are a requirement for the school's design considerations to ensure that the resulting building provides maximum access to and throughout the building.

Creating additional spaces will help to meet the projected need for extra places for children from across all protected characteristics.

Surinder Singh Equalities Officer, ext. 37 4148

13. Background information and other papers:

N/A

14. Summary of appendices:

N/A

15. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

16. Is this a "key decision"?

Yes

17. If a key decision please explain reason

17.1 Spending of over £1m is to be committed on a scheme that has not been previously specifically authorised by Council.