

DECISION-MAKER:	Executive Director of Children's Services & Learning
SUBJECT:	Relocation of the Compass Centre PRU to the Millbrook Site
DATE OF DECISION:	03 August 2011
REPORT OF:	Director: Infrastructure & Strategy, Children's Services & Learning
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	

BRIEF SUMMARY

At the Cabinet meeting of 06/06/11, it was agreed "to delegate authority to the Executive Director for Children's Services & Learning, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services, following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Children's Services and Resources to take any action necessary to facilitate the use and occupation of the Former Millbrook Community School site for the provision of children's services, including services ancillary to those functions, subject to compliance with any statutory requirements. This delegation shall include, but is not limited to, the power to grant or acquire property and contractual interests in the site to deliver such services."

In line with this decision, this report seeks approval to determine the proposal to relocate the Compass Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provision to the site previously occupied by the Millbrook Community School, from 5 September 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To consider and take into account the outcome of stakeholder consultation, as set out in *Appendix 1*.
- (ii) To determine whether or not to approve the relocation of the Compass Centre PRU provision to the site previously occupied by the Millbrook Community School, effective from 5 September 2011.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Compass Centre PRU currently provides alternative learning for the city's permanently excluded Key Stage 3 pupils. However, the Compass Centre's present accommodation is deemed to be unsuitable, against both quantitative and qualitative measures. Furthermore, there is a need to expand this provision to cover primary-aged pupils (for which there is currently no permanent base in the city). The Compass Centre does not presently have sufficient space to accommodate such an expansion in provision.
2. Owing to the fact that the Compass Centre has insufficient space to accommodate its current and changing needs (and taking into account the fact that there is no scope to expand the existing buildings), it is perceived that it is necessary to relocate the PRU to a larger site. Due to its proximity with the Compass site, its being ideally suited to educational reutilisation and the fact that it has recently been vacated, the former Millbrook Community School site has been identified as the preferable alternative location in this

respect.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. The existence of alternative options for the relocation of the Compass Centre PRU would necessarily be reliant upon the existence of alternative sites that were readily accessible and provided suitable facilities for this type of provision. However, there are no other vacant sites in the city that have the same level/standard of pre-established educational provision waiting to be utilised. As such, there are no other competing alternatives for a potential relocation.
4. The option of not relocating this provision would present the authority with a significant issue in terms of the Compass Centre being unable to accommodate the proposed expansion in provision (to primary-aged pupils). The only realistic means of overcoming this would be to locate the Key Stage 1 & 2 provision at the Millbrook site, whilst retaining the Key Stage 3 provision at the Compass site. However, this would fail to deliver improved accommodation for the Key Stage 4 provision and would result in the authority incurring the increased costs associated with operating provision across a split site. As such, this option has been rejected.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

5. SCC is proposing to bring together responsibility for Alternative Learning in the city to include all Key Stages. This will enable the Authority to better fulfil its statutory responsibilities for permanently excluded pupils and enhance its ability to coordinate the education of children in its care. A key element of this proposal is the expansion of the age range of pupils provided for at the Compass Centre, in order that primary-aged children can be catered for (in addition to the current provision for Key Stage 3 pupils).
6. The proposal has required a restructuring of the current service provision and expansion of the current staffing structure. No staff were either made redundant or dismissed as part of the restructure and, as such, there are no redundancy costs associated with it. Staff were placed into one of two categories: employees in unchanged posts; and employees considered natural successors, as per agreed selection criteria. In line with SCC protocol, formal consultation with staff on these proposals was conducted between 20 May and 10 June 2011. The restructure itself was approved by the Head of Organisational Development on 13 June 2011 and will take effect as of 5 September 2011.
7. In order to support this restructuring of provision, the Authority is looking to improve and extend the educational facilities available to the Compass Centre. Critical in this respect is the fact that the existing accommodation is unsuited to the needs of its current intake, in terms of both the capacity and the quality of the facilities on offer. With the envisaged expansion in provision to include Key Stage 1 & 2, the lack of capacity at the Compass Centre would be compounded if relevant remedial action were not to be taken.
8. As such, it is proposed that the Compass Centre provision is relocated to the site previously occupied by the Millbrook Community School, with effect from 5 September 2011 (i.e. the beginning of the 2011/12 academic year). The proposed new site has the dual advantages of being large enough to

accommodate the (expanded) Compass Centre provision, whilst also affording significant benefits in terms of the standard of educational facilities available. In this latter respect, the buildings on the proposed new site house a range of facilities that are not readily accessible at the existing site. Included within these are:

- Science labs
- ICT suite
- Technology rooms/workshops
- Performance areas
- Sports hall and gym

In addition, the Millbrook site has extensive external play/recreation space. This move would therefore result in a significant improvement for Key Stage 1-3 PRU pupils within the city.

9. If approved, the proposal is that a suitable area of the Millbrook site should be refurbished between July and August 2011, in order to provide a temporary base for the Compass Centre in time for the beginning of the 2011/12 academic year. Over the course of this academic year, other areas of the Millbrook site would be refurbished, in order to provide the long-term, permanent base for the Compass Centre. The PRU would be rehoused in these areas of the building as of September 2012.
10. The proposal has been the subject of significant informal consultation within the Authority. In line with this. The decision to put forward the proposal for the relocation of the Compass Centre to the Millbrook site was taken in partnership with the Headteacher of the school and key officers from within Children's Services & Learning.
11. A formal six-week consultation on this proposal was commenced on Tuesday 14 June 2011 and concluded on 25 July 2011. This process comprised:
 - A consultation document, sent out to all parent/carers of pupils currently educated at the Compass Centre; the School Management Committee; all PRU staff; and Headteachers of all schools within the city. This document included a response form, by which stakeholders were offered a means to feed their views into the decision making process;
 - An online consultation document, in the same format as the above, located on the SCC website; and
 - A public meeting, held at the compass Centre on 1 July 2011, which was open to all parties. Public Notices were displayed at the entrances of both the Compass Centre and the Millbrook site and in local libraries and housing offices.
12. There were several responses to the formal consultation process, with 89% of the views expressed being in favour of the proposal. Only one response that didn't support the proposals was received, which stated the reason for such as being that "the proposed location is completely untenable for pupils in the east of the city. Effectively, such a move would render PRU provision non-viable as an option for purchased support."

A summary of the responses to consultation is included in *Appendix 1*.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

13. At the meeting on 6th June Cabinet gave approval to add £1,000,000 to the Children's Services & Learning Capital Programme in order to invest in provision for the city's Pupil Referral Unit.
14. The Executive Director for Children's Services and Learning in consultation with the Children's Services and Learning Capital Board has given approval to spend £200,000 on initial works and feasibility studies at the Millbrook site.
15. The premises costs of running this part of the Millbrook site are estimated to be no more than £50,000. A site manager has been employed to manage the site. These costs will be met from within the Education & Commissioning division budget.

Property/Other

16. There is not currently a definitive strategy for the occupation of the whole of the Millbrook site. However, the intention at present is for occupation to be dealt with within three distinct phases, as follows:
 - Phase 1 – the temporary location of Key Stage 2 & 3 PRU provision in the building from September 2011.
 - Phase 2 – the permanent location of Key Stage 2-4 PRU provision in the building from September 2012 onwards. This will “free” the temporary base utilised for the Key Stage 2 & 3 provision within the 2011/12 academic year.
 - Phase 3 – the permanent location of various SCC teams within the remainder of the building at some point after the completion of Phase 2.
17. Phase 1 will involve the relocation of the PRU provision currently located at the Compass Centre. As the property is leased by SCC, there will not be any potential for a capital receipt from the current site, although there will be an ongoing revenue saving of £12,000 per annum. Phase 2 will involve the relocation of the PRU provision currently located at the Melbourne Street site. The vacation of this site would potentially release a capital receipt.
18. Work on the details of Phase 3 cannot be undertaken at present, as it is contingent upon the planning for Phase 2. To explain, as the PRU is the priority user of the building, the amount of space left for other uses will not be known until the Phase 2 project has been fully specified. It is expected that this work will be complete sometime in September and that, as such, work on planning Phase 3 will be able to commence at that point. However, initial discussions have highlighted the following teams as potential users of the building in the future:
 - Child Protection Conference Team (currently based at Blakeney Road, Southampton);
 - Barnado's Team (currently based at 52-54 Seagarth Lane, Southampton);
 - Pathways Team (currently based at 30A Cedar Road, Southampton); and
 - Sections of the Children's Disability Service (various locations).

19. It should also be noted that the intention is that the Oasis Academy: Lord's Hill should continue to occupy and operate both the Down to Earth Farm and the Motor Vehicle Workshop at nil cost to SCC. The intention is to grant Oasis a long lease at nil rent for this accommodation, subject to Cabinet approval. Furthermore, for the 2011/12 academic year, the Academy will continue to operate the onsite Sports Complex. A procurement exercise will be conducted during this year to determine the operator of this facility for future years.
20. The Millbrook site represents the only one within SCC's portfolio that meets the necessary criteria for the relocation of the whole of the PRU provision, with these being:
 - Size – the curriculum modelling process has indicated that the PRU requires a total GFA of 3,029m².
 - Facilities – it was felt that a serious issue with the existing provision was that it lacked adequate sports facilities and specialist teaching spaces. Any new site should be able to provide these.
 - Timescales – a vacant site required from July 2011 onwards, to enable the occupation by Key Stage 2 & 3 provision by September 2011.

As Millbrook represented the only option that was able to satisfy all of the above criteria, no other options were considered.

21. The provision of temporary modular classrooms at the Compass Centre to address the insufficiencies of accommodation was disregarded because the site has insufficient external area to be able to accommodate this (the Schedule of Accommodation indicates that the Key Stage 2 provision would require an additional 560m² worth of floor area relative to the current provision).
22. The arrangements for Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) of the section of the building occupied by the PRU will reflect the arrangements currently in place for PRU buildings. To elaborate, both of the PRU's existing sites are covered by the corporate R&M arrangements, in addition to which the PRU has its own delegated budget for buildings investment items (much in the same way as maintained schools have DFC allocations). R&M issues that flow from this are outlined below.
23. Repairing obligations currently rest with the Oasis Academy and the extent of any R&M works is unknown without undertaking a condition survey. The condition survey work undertaken in 2008, prior to the lease being put in place, gave a base cost of £720k (exclusive of fees). It is unlikely that this work has been addressed as the life and use of the buildings was considered short term. Reuse will therefore reintroduce this maintenance backlog into the overall portfolio. Maintenance log books will have to be obtained from Oasis and checked. A test and inspection programme will need to be reintroduced with any information shortfall made good. This may produce further remedial costs currently unknown and unfunded. With multiple users on site, an agreement will also need to be considered as to how future costs and accountability should be split.
24. There will be void costs associated with the existing Compass Centre site

being vacant for approximately two months after the relocation prior to returning possession back to the Diocesan Education Board. It is estimated that these costs will be in the region of £6,000. Any such costs will be paid for from the PRU's delegated budget. These estimates do not cover any reactive repairs and maintenance costs incurred associated with break-ins and vandalism during the void management period.

25. The Diocesan Education Board may serve a schedule of Dilapidations upon the City Council in respect of any disrepair. The schedule will seek a financial settlement to remedy any wants of repair. This cost can not be determined at this time. There will be professional fees incurred in defending any claim and negotiating a reduction in the level of settlement due.
26. The planned occupation of the Millbrook site will prevent a disposal of part of the property in the short to medium term, thus forgoing a potential capital receipt. The Millbrook Campus is identified within the city's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as being capable of being redeveloped (in part) for residential development. The attached plan (Appendix 3) indicates the potential development opportunity. The level of capital receipt forgone has not been established, as a valuation of the site has not been commissioned.
27. The granting of a long lease (25 years) to Oasis Community Learning for the Down to Earth Centre & the Workshop will sterilise part of the site for redevelopment in the longer term,
28. The relocation of services highlighted above may, however, enable the release of smaller properties for disposal. Since the planning for Phase 3 cannot be commenced at present, the actual properties involved are not known.
29. The Millbrook School is subject to a 5 year lease to Oasis Community Learning. The lease requires Oasis to repair & maintain the school in good and substantial condition. The Council has the ability to serve Oasis with a Schedule of Dilapidations to remedy any wants of repair or to seek a financial settlement in lieu of repairs. This would absolve the Council of certain repairing costs to address the buildings basic condition during the remodelling and occupational works. However, current custom and practice (coupled with the policy drives surrounding the interface between local authorities and academies) dictate that such repairing obligations are extremely difficult to enforce. The CSL *Strategy & Capital Programme Team* (who have worked on approximately 20 such academy projects) have not heard of a local authority ever having pursued such a course of action.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

30. In accordance with s.14 of the Education Act 1996, the Council is responsible for ensuring sufficient schools are available for providing appropriate primary and secondary education in their area. Section 19 requires the Council to make arrangements for the provision of suitable full or part time education at school or otherwise than at school for children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not receive suitable education for any period unless such arrangements are made for

them. Any school established under s.19 is known as a PRU.

Other Legal Implications:

- 31. In relocated a PRU within the city the Council is required to have regards to the impact on staff, pupils and the local community in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and its duties under s.17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.
- 32. Regard must also be had to the guidance for Local Authorities and Schools on PRUs and Alternative Provision issued by the Depart for Education.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 33. The relocation of the Compass Centre to more educationally-suitable premises, coupled with capital investment in the associated buildings will contribute to the outcomes of both the 14-19 Strategy and Children & Young People’s Plan by improving the educational offer that can be provided to pupils who attend this institution.

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KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members’ Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1.	Summary of Responses to Statutory Consultation
2.	Public Notice
3.	Millbrook Site Plan

Documents In Members’ Rooms

1.	None
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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