

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Tuesday, 19 September 2023

Decision No: (CAB 23/24 37963)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing
SUBJECT:	Holcroft House options
AUTHOR:	Vernon Nosal

THE DECISION

- (i) To relocate residents to alternative permanent accommodation that is compliant with fire safety requirements and to close Holcroft House as a care home.
- (ii) Subject to the approval of (i) above, to delegate authority to the Executive Director Wellbeing & Housing, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing, to take all further and consequential actions to implement the recommendation.
- (iii) To note that a further report on the future of the property will be brought to Cabinet in due course.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. Holcroft House requires significant building works to make it compliant in respect of the Fire Safety requirements, as well works to remove and replace the asbestos containing ceilings.
2. The fire safety work was initially planned to take place over a 78-week period with residents moving rooms as sections of the building were worked on.
3. The vulnerable nature of the residents presents a risk of delays to the work, and therefore significant disruption to residents, if the residents remain in the building. For example, if a resident's health deteriorates and they require end of life care work would need to be paused.
4. The Council has a duty of care for the residents. There are known risks with moving people with dementia whether that is within their living environment or outside of it. Moving residents once, under carefully managed circumstances, is the least impactful to them (Appendix 1). Residing through 78+ weeks of building works, relocating within the building to allow the phased work, the coming and going of strangers and noise will carry the greatest impact and is not a viable or practical option. There is also the risk that additional issues could be discovered, once the work commences, that could impact on the phased approach.
5. Holcroft House is a dated building that falls below the Care Standards Act

2000 recommended standards which include facilities such as en-suites and a minimum of 10m² floor space to be provided. The costs would be in excess of £4.5m and would require residents to relocate to alternative premises during the period of works.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

1. Residents to remain in the building and relocate in phases during building works to suit the programming of the work. This is not recommended as residents cannot reasonably be exposed to this level of risk based on the extensive duration of the building works, the risk associated with the removal of asbestos (even though undertaken under controlled conditions in compliance with the safe working practice for asbestos removal), the risk associated with living in a building undergoing extensive building work; the risk of an extending timeline due to the vulnerability of our residents and the increased risks to people with dementia in being moved to accommodate the phasing of the works (even within the same building). The asbestos is not a risk within current stable conditions. However, the proposed work would require full removal.
2. A wider project to implement improvements to Holcroft House that bring it to the Care Standards Act 2000, this would include expanded living space, installation of en-suites, improvements to the infrastructure/IT in addition to the fire safety work. The cost for this would be prohibitively high and would also require residents to be relocated out of the building long term. To develop the existing building to current standards required, was estimated to cost £4.50M to £5.25M in 2022, with inflation there is an estimated 15% increase to £5.17M to £6M. To demolish the existing building and construct a new build dual registered home is estimated to be within the range of £16.0M to £16.75M.
3. Complete fire safety works and move residents back into Holcroft House. There are additional risks in a secondary move for people with dementia and this is what we are trying to negate. There could be potential delays with completion of works which would delay relocation back to Holcroft House. Residents will settle into new accommodation and then have to move again. The property would still not meet the standards.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

Cabinet took into consideration the following recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting held on 14 September 2023:

- i) That, for the Cabinet meeting on 19 September, clarity is provided around the specific works that have been identified as being required that have necessitated the increase in both the costs of the project and the timescales involved.
- ii) That the questions raised by Unite relating to Holcroft House are circulated to the Committee. (Completed – Sent by Scrutiny Manager)
- iii) That the Committee are provided with written clarification with regards to the suggestion that resources may have been transferred from the Holcroft House budget to support the maintenance of the Glen Lee building.

iv) That the Committee are provided with an audit trail of the decision made by the Cabinet Member to halt the fire safety remediation works in January 2023. The audit trail should include the forum for the decision, and how the decision was made.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 19 September 2023

Decision Maker:
The Cabinet

Proper Officer:
Judy Cordell

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*