

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting12th June 2014

1. Title of Item/Report

Asset Review, School Capital and Site Disposal update

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the Asset Review and builds on earlier reports to Members.

The report summarised progress in implementing the recommendations in respect of the Review of Libraries, provided an update on progress around Asset Transfer arrangements and provided a recommendation around the future of the Education Centre Site.

Members were aware of previous reports outlining the approach to building assets and investments in schools capital, with the latest being presented to Cabinet in November 2013.

The reports sought approval to explore options and opportunities relating to the utilisation of assets in the context of ongoing service reviews and opportunities for Community Asset Transfer, including the creation of a Community Building Trust. The report provided an update on progress, with specific information regarding the creation of a Community Building Trust and subsequent asset transfer of four community buildings.

This was the latest in a series of reports on the EIT Asset Review. The review had financial savings targets of £250,000 in 2012/13 and £1,000,000 per annum thereafter.

The original target saving from the Asset review was to deliver savings of £1m by 2013/14. Overall the savings would exceed the target and the latest estimate was £1.4m by 2015/16. There would however be a shortfall in 2014/15 due to the delays associated with the Education Centre and Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre and this would be factored into the MTFP. The review had also generated capital receipts of over £1m to date and this would increase with further disposals.

The review had covered a wide range of Council owned buildings; including Office Accommodation, Children's Centres (linking into the EIG

review), Libraries and Youth and Community Buildings.

The savings were summarised as follows:-

- Rationalisation of Office Accommodation - resulting in the closure of 4 buildings. This has generated a revenue saving of £230,000 per year and also generated capital receipts of £1m. The sale of Gloucester House also resulted in the relocation of Visualsoft (a successful and growing local company) into the Town Centre.

- Operation of Childrens' Centres - Linking into the EIG Review which reported to Cabinet in November 2011, £140,000 was saved on building running costs per annum on associated Centres covered in the review.

- Libraries – The review of the library service included the co-location of facilities and changes to opening hours at a number of libraries and this has saved £400,000. Investment continues in our libraries and following the redevelopments of Thornaby and Stockton Town Centre libraries, the new facility for Billingham will open in the Town Centre January 2015.

- Youth & Community Centres – four community centres have now been transferred to a new charitable organisation, OnSite Building Trust. This ensures that the buildings remain open for community use, while generating a saving of £195,000pa for the Council.

- Other Buildings – there were a number of buildings which are no longer occupied and buildings vacated (e.g. Youth Café, Skinner Street). This has saved £160,000 and generated capital receipts of £115,000.

The majority of savings had been delivered through rationalisation of facilities, co-location of services and alternative means of delivery rather than any reduction in front line services to the public. The updated savings profile would be incorporated into the next update of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

RESOLVED that:-

1. In respect of progress in implementing the agreed Libraries Strategy, Members:-
 - a. Noted that the co-location of services with Redhill and Riverbank children centres has been completed.
 - b. Noted that the old library building in Thornaby is in the process of

being sold to a GP practice ensuring the building is used to support Health and Community Services

c. Noted that the former site of Roseworth Library is currently being marketed for disposal.

d. Approved the disposal or Asset Transfer of the sites of Roseberry and Bedale libraries following the opening of the new facility in Billingham Town Centre.

2. The successful transfer of the following four buildings to the OnSite Community Building Trust be noted:-

- Elmwood Youth and Community Centre
- Grangefield Youth and Community Centre
- Robert Atkinson Youth and Community Centre
- Stillington Youth and Community Centre

3. Given the successful transfer of the assets above and subject to the completion of a satisfactory business case, Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre and Norton Community Resource Centre be transferred to OnSite Community Building Trust with effect from April 2015. The review of the business case and the completion of terms and conditions be delegated to the Directors of Resources and Law and Democracy in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

4. Following the previous decision to vacate the Education Centre, the site be marketed for disposal with the services relocated (mainly to Stockton 6th form College). Consideration would be given to allocate a small element of the capital receipt to support community facilities or activities in the local area.

5. The progress be noted around the development of a Vocational Educational facility on the site of the former campus school. The Pool on the site in the first instance be advertised for asset transfer / lease and if this is not successful then the pool be decommissioned.

6. The progress in the disposal of surplus land and the development of the Norton site to deliver the playing pitch strategy be noted.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To implement proposals for Library Strategy and Community Assets and agree land disposal plans.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 12 – Asset Review, School Capital and Site Disposal Update as he was a member of governing body of a local school that could have been affected by options surrounding the Education Centre.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday, 20th June 2014

Proper Officer
16 June 2014