

CABINET
19 APRIL 2018**USE OF CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUILDINGS – TRANSFER
OF THE OUTREACH CENTRE AT THE GROVE PRIMARY
SCHOOL, MALVERN**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr A C Roberts

Relevant Officer

Director of Children, Families and Communities

Local Member

Mr J O'Donnell

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) approves the proposals for the future use of the outreach children's centre building Sunshine at the Grove as outlined in paragraphs 5-7 below; and**
 - (b) authorises the Director of Children, Families and Communities to take all necessary steps to give effect to the above.**

Background – 'Sunshine at the Grove' Outreach Centre

2. In June 2016 Cabinet agreed a range of recommendations relating to the provision of effective prevention services for children and young people including optimising the use of children's centre buildings for delivery in localities.
3. Cabinet approved the proposals for the future use of a number of children's centre buildings where consultation was not required; this included the proposal that the children's centre outreach facility, locally named 'Sunshine at The Grove' located at the Grove Primary School in Malvern continued to be used by the Parenting and Family Support provider (currently Action for Children) for the delivery of services.
4. The decision was implemented and a lease granted to Action for Children until 31 March 2019, in line with a contract for provision of parenting and family support.
5. This facility is an integral part of the school building and was converted in 2008 to utilise what was at the time vacant accommodation within the building, situated next to the school nursery. The facility is small; it includes a small activity room, office and kitchen and was used mainly as an administrative base and for delivery of parenting programmes and adult learning.

6. Initially the centre was leased to Barnardos who were commissioned to deliver children's centre services and then to Action for Children in 2013 through the commissioning of Early Help.

7. In October 2017 the provider, Action for Children, reviewed their use of the building which was used for parenting groups and as a meeting space and sought agreement to relinquish the lease on the centre as they did not have an ongoing need for it. They have continued to provide and support services for families from Sunshine Children's Centre in Malvern and in the locality and through other community venues.

8. These services include a number of community-run stay & play groups running across the district that are supported and promoted by the provider. The support includes volunteer training by the Community Development Workers. Partnership working with Health colleagues and other professionals ensure vulnerable families are identified.

9. During the initial children's centre consultation that concluded in January 2016 the school had expressed an interest to take on the centre as additional nursery space in order to extend the early education and childcare offer in the community, as an option. Following further discussion they have confirmed that this remains the case.

10. The school have now (February/March 2018) carried out a local consultation on their proposal using the following statement:

"Our school nursery currently delivers 2 funded sessions a day, 5 days a week for 3 & 4 year olds in the morning and 2 year olds in the afternoon. We would like to use the existing children's centre building as an extension of our nursery building, specifically for our 2 year olds, which would enable us to take them during the morning sessions in addition to the 3 and 4 year olds. This is currently a barrier for some families who would like to use the nursery but would have to make repeat journeys throughout the day for those families who have more than one child between 2 and 4 years. We would have capacity to offer places for 10 more children and would also consider extending our opening hours to 9am to 3pm, which in turn would make us more accessible for local families in need of longer sessions. In the future we would also like to offer 30 hour funded places."

The statement was shared with parents at the school and nursery and with the local district and county councillors.

11. The school received five responses to the proposal all in favour of increased flexibility for parents and the option of children from all age ranges attending at the same time.

12. It is therefore proposed that the children's centre building known as 'Sunshine at The Grove' be leased to Grove Primary School for the continued provision of early childhood services.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

13. There are no direct negative implications relating to the Council's statutory responsibilities in relation to the sufficiency of children's centre delivery arising from this report. The proposals for the outreach centre at the Grove will have a positive impact for families in the area through the provision of an extended and more flexible early education and childcare offer.

14. There are no immediate HR implications for the Council arising from this report.

15. If the facility is no longer used the overhead costs, albeit minimal, remain the responsibility of the County Council. The utilisation of a space within school that will have been designed for early childhood use to provide early childhood education and care increases sustainable sufficiency and avoids the use of capital funds to create new spaces to meet this duty.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

16. These proposals have no direct impact on information risk or privacy impact at this stage.

17. A Public Health Impact screening of these proposals has indicated that a full Assessment is not required.

Equality and Diversity Implications

18. An Equality Impact Screening has indicated that a full Equality Impact Assessment of these proposals is not required.

Supporting Information

Further details are set out in Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Site Plan
- Appendix 2 – Location Map
- Appendix 3 – Floor Plan

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:-

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held in June 2016

Reports and decision notice related to the delegated decision of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Families in September 2016.