

Agenda



Housing and Communities Committee

Date: Wednesday, 7 November 2018

Time: 10:00

Venue: Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Clydebank

Contact: Nuala Quinn-Ross, Committee Officer
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Dear Member

ITEM TO FOLLOW

I refer to the agenda for the above meeting which was issued on 25 October 2018 and enclose a copy of the undernoted report which was not available for issue at that time.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

Note referred to:-

**12 RELOCATION OPTIONS FOR BELLSMYRE SCHOOLS'
OUT CARE AND BELLSMYRE DIGITAL**

177 - 181

Submit report by the Strategic Lead, Regeneration providing an update on the progress of activity in relation to Longcraggs, Bellsmyre.

Distribution:-

Councillor Diane Docherty (Chair)
Councillor Caroline McAllister (Vice Chair)
Councillor Jim Brown
Councillor Gail Casey
Councillor Karen Conaghan
Councillor Ian Dickson
Councillor David McBride
Councillor Iain McLaren
Councillor Marie McNair
Councillor John Millar
Councillor John Mooney
Councillor Sally Page

All other Councillors for information

Chief Executive
Strategic Director, Regeneration, Environment & Growth
Strategic Lead, Housing & Employability
Strategic Lead, Regeneration

Date issued: 2 November 2018

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability

Housing and Communities Committee: 7 November 2018

Subject: Update Report on Longcraggs, Bellsmyre

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the progress of activity in relation to Longcraggs, Bellsmyre following update paper to Housing and Communities Committee on 15 August 2018.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Notes the contents of this paper;
- (ii) Authorises the Strategic Lead, Regulatory to enforce the Notice to Quit approved at Report by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability to Housing and Communities Committee: 15 August 2018;
- (iii) Authorise Officers to proceed with assisting Bellsmyre Digital and Bellsmyre Out of Schools with the options outlined in 4.14 below; and
- (iv) Authorise Officers to continue discussions with both groups in terms of agreeing longer term alternatives

3. Background

- 3.1** The Longcraggs Centre forms part of the former Aitkenbar Primary School site. The premises are currently leased to Bellsmyre Digital (BD) and Bellsmyre Schools Out Club (BSOC).
- 3.2** New leases with BD and BSOC were entered into in April 2014 which provided the Council with the ability to obtain vacant possession having given the tenants six months notice in writing from 1 November 2015 onwards. The tenants entered into these leases with full knowledge of the break option being inserted.
- 3.3** From June 2014 to June 2017 work progressed on development of the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School (OLSP) on the site of former council homes and plans for development of new Council housing stock in the former Aitkenbar School site in Bellsmyre area to meet identified housing need. These 2 sites were subject to an arrangement which followed an options

appraisal which assessed the site where the school is now located as the most appropriate site, previously this was a Housing asset.

3.4 The Aitkenbar site will form part of the Council's ambitious new Council house building programme and was included in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan approved by the Housing and Communities Committee in November 2016. The development requires to be completed by March 2021 to achieve Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme funding and contribute to the Scottish Government 50,000 new homes target.

3.5 The agreement states vacant possession of the whole site is required including the Longcraggs Centre in order that a new social housing development can be completed.

4. Main Issues

4.1 The Longcraggs Centre is a single storey detached building set off Whiteford Avenue with its own separate entrance way.

4.2 The two clubs, BD and BSOC use distinct space but also share some facilities, with the only disabled access to the building being gained through the entrance to the BSOC part of the accommodation. Both community organisations occupy on agreements that are running year to year but incorporate break clauses permitting the landlord to terminate giving a minimum of 6 months' notice.

4.3 There is limited alternative accommodation for both groups within West Dunbartonshire Council area. Early discussions took place with both organisations, led by the Performance & Strategy Manager and Assets Coordinator in August and September 2017, to go through the reasons for notice to be served and to discuss the requirements of the groups for potential new premises. It was agreed to identify any possible alternatives in the local area and arrange for both organisations to visit these.

4.4 The organisations visited the most viable alternative, the pavilion situated opposite the new OLSP. However they considered this option and decided it would not be fit for purpose. Following this visit the groups wrote to the Council to outline their future requirements for a premise and have requested that consideration be given to providing a new two storey building on the site of the current Longcraggs Centre.

4.5 At that time both groups confirmed that there were no other Council alternatives in the area and the groups were not keen to look at other facilities in the area for rental, such as space within the Community Development Trust operated Cutty Sark Centre. Despite there being potential for the pavilion to be refurbished for use by one group, both organisations continue to stress that the pavilion is unsuitable for future needs.

- 4.6** To inform progression of this issue a range of options were compiled and considered by Asset Management, Performance and Strategy and Housing Development Teams.
- 4.7** Around 10 meetings took place with the groups between Asset Management and the Communities Teams since 2017 to investigate potential alternative accommodation.
- 4.8** Both groups are registered Charities with Bellsmyre Out of Schools Club registered by the Care Inspectorate to deliver out of school services.
- 4.9** Both groups receive funding from Housing and Employability in the form of grant funding to pay for the current rent of the Longcraggs centre
- 4.10** Both groups also receive funding from the Dumbarton Common Good Budget and a 5 year funding commitment was given by Council on 5 March 2018
- Bellsmyre Digital £35,601
 - Bellsmyre Out of Schools Club £6,000
- 4.11** Both groups have been asked during discussions to provide a summary of their current operating arrangements, sessions, size and usage. Bellsmyre Digital currently have a Service Level Agreement in respect of their funding from the Dumbarton Common Good and adhere to this agreement which is monitored by Finance Officers.
- 4.12** All Council managed facilities and partner facilities in Bellsmyre have been explored for either a permanent and temporary solution. The only option available is the Howatshaws Pavilion.
- 4.13** Whilst both groups are aware that they will require to move in order to progress the development of the site at Aitkenbar for housing developments they have expressed that any such relocation will only be considered if the Council give an undertaking in relation to building a new facility for both groups. The Council does not have any obligation to provide a replacement building under the terms of the lease.
- 4.14** With the process of options appraisal now completed the only options currently available are as follows:
- Bellsmyre Digital
Concorde Centre Computer Suite – currently part of a refurbishment programme.
 - Bellsmyre Out of Schools
Howatshaws Pavilion - refurbished to comply with Care Inspectorate registration using a Developers Contribution (£25,000) and grant funding from Housing and Employability (£10,000).
- 4.15** Both Groups had requested that the option of demolition of the current Howatshaws Pavilion and the erection of a two storey structure on the site be considered. There is no budget current available for this and such an option

cannot be accommodated within the timescales for the delivery of the housing site nor can the option be considered as best value for Council. Demolition and new build on the Howatshaws site would also require that BOSC vacate that property for a lengthy period. The process so far shows that both groups agree that there is no suitable alternative temporary accommodation to facilitate this. Therefore the options described at 4:14 above are in effect the long term solution.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no significant people implications in terms of this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** Other than the financial implications indicated at 4.14 there are no additional financial implications in respect of this report.

- 6.2** There are no procurement implications at this stage in respect of this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** The main risk associated with the disposal of the site is that the transaction may not conclude for a variety of reasons including planning, ground conditions and abnormalities. In the case that the transaction fails to complete, the Council will require to remarket the site for sale.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An Equality Impact Screening did not indicate any further action required in relation to this report. A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be required for any temporary/permanent relocations.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Consultations have been undertaken with Regulatory, Finance, Housing and Employability in relation to the proposed temporary/permanent relocations. However wider consultation will take place during the Planning Application process.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** By agreeing to this proposal the Council will assist in:-
- improving the local economic growth and employability of the area;
 - improving local housing and environmental sustainable infrastructure;
 - improving the wellbeing of communities and protect the welfare of vulnerable people.

Peter Barry

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| Appendices: | None |
| Background Papers: | Report by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability to Housing and Communities Committee: 15 August 2018 |
| Wards Affected: | Ward 3 |