

Written statement of a non-key officer decision
Chief finance officer

Title	Business Case regarding release of Ryefield Centre, Ross-on-Wye
Decision maker	Chief finance officer
Date of decision	12 March 2018
Report exemption class	Open
Purpose	<p>To agree the release of the Ryefield Centre in Ross on Wye for alternative use with investment in Ross Library and the Old Chapel to accommodate remaining service based at the centre. There will also be a new lease arrangement with the Ross Town Council for the use of the Old Chapel. This decision relates to recommendations agreed by cabinet on 14th September 2017 entitled "Future use of the children centre buildings" with the chief finance officer authorised to take all operational decisions necessary.</p> <p>Following the decision of Cabinet in 14th September 2017 regarding the future management of children's centre service buildings a detailed business case has been developed in relation to Ross on Wye relocation of services. It is proposed to lease the Old Chapel from the Ross-on-Wye Town Council for a period of five years, with investment in both Ross Library and the Old Chapel in order to accommodate children centre service delivery and a multi-agency office. As a consequence of these moves the Ryefield Centre can be declared surplus to operational requirements for development potential.</p>
Decision	<p>That:</p> <p>(a) to implement changes in delivery of children centre services at Ross-on-Wye based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend of no more than £272k is allocated to Ross Library and the Old Chapel in Ross to enable accommodation of children centre services and multi-agency office. • Agreement with Ross Town Council of a 5 year full repairing lease at zero rent, with an option to extend to 10 years. • The overage on the Old Chapel is withdrawn at the expiry of the lease with the town council.

	<p>(b) for the Ryefield Centre declared surplus to operational requirements and released for development potential.</p> <p>(c) In line with contract procedure rules the Owen Pell Ltd contract for Phase 1 works is varied by no more than 50% of the original contract value to conduct an element of phase 2 works at Ross library to accommodate children centre services; and</p> <p>(d) the Assistant Director Communities be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the above recommendations.</p>
Reason for the decision	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50025192</p>
Consultation	
Options considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The alternative option is to retain the status quo with services remaining at the Ryefield Centre. This is not recommended as the building is underutilised costing the council in the region of £65k per annum to operate. Also, retaining the building would not release an asset for the council to reinvest. 2. Other tenants could be attracted to lease part of the centre but market rents would not cover all of the on-going revenue costs. 3. That a separate tender is prepared for phase 2 works at Ross Library. This option has been discounted because there is an opportunity to conduct building work simultaneously by the same contractor appointed to complete Phase 1 work for internal changes to the library. By conducting works at the same time it has the potential to create economic efficiencies (through one contractor) and less disruption on site.
Declarations of interest	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	16 March 2018

<p>Officer:</p> <p>Chief finance officer (Andrew Lovegrove)</p>	<p>Date 12 March 2018</p>
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