

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre Appointment of an external provider to design layout and interior design for Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre, at Hillside building.
Date of decision:	01/03/2021
Decision maker:	Director Adults and Communities
Authority for delegated decision:	The authority for the specified officer to take this decision is set out in the executive decision report approved on 5 th January 2021. (Report ref: Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre, 05/01/2021) http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=50035299
Ward:	The Hillside building is located in Red Hill Ward, but the Centre will be accessed by residents countywide.
Consultation:	Consultation with Cabinet Member – Health and Adult Wellbeing was undertaken on 16/12/2021.
Decision made:	<p>To award a contract to Gotch, Saunders & Surridge LLP, trading as GSS Architecture (Company Number OC336029) for the provision of a design to refurbish a designated area of the Hillside building, and install specialist equipment, adaptations and technology which will be used to deliver an Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre, near Hereford city centre. The Centre will offer facilities for demonstration of equipment, adaptations and technology, and provision of advice.</p> <p>The Centre should allow for assessments to be undertaken, and equipment to be demonstrated in an environment that as closely as possible reflects a domestic house setting, giving a more realistic representation of how the equipment, adaptations and technology will work in the service user's home.</p> <p>The cost of this contract is £20,000.00. This will be taken from the allocated project budget.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>Herefordshire Council has committed to develop an Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre near Hereford city centre. A design is required which takes into account a range of customer needs, and requirements, from across several stakeholder groups. This requirement could not be met internally and therefore a decision was made that external expertise should be sought.</p> <p>GSS Architecture have been appointed via a tender process, and will work with Herefordshire Council to gather requirements and propose suitable design options, including providing technical advice (e.g. planning and building regulation advice) as to the best design and layout option.</p> <p>Once finalised, GSS Architecture will provide Herefordshire Council with all required documentation to take the design forward with a building contractor to complete the works.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The opportunities the Centre can provide need to be fully understood prior to implementation, and monitored once the Centre is opened. Existing arrangements evidence this type of assessment and advice centre would provide benefits. The service

	<p>already knows that they need to expand provision in this area which can be achieved with effective promotion of the use of the centre. There is a risk that the Centre does not achieve the benefits identified. The project has a dependency on another project to review the Independent Living Service's operational procedures. Close links will be maintained throughout the project and any considerations which may impact on the delivery of the Centre will be discussed at the appropriate project board and escalated as required. This risk is monitored within the project risk log.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing risks – the service on offer is subject to adequate staffing to provide opportunity for promoting the Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre. If the Centre is under resourced, this may result in not optimising the use of the centre. Staffing the service is detailed within the annual service delivery plan for the operational service. Additional resource may be required in order to run the Centre effectively, and opening times have not yet been confirmed. Both of these considerations would impact upon revenue costs, and may also require a management of change process. • The project resource (with the exception of the Project Manager) is from the existing staff and there is a risk that project tasks and deadlines will not be met due to a conflict with BAU requirements. The Project Manager proposes that the project team is amended now that the initial works have been scoped. Reducing the input needed from the Prevention Service once the project moves into delivery will decrease the risk that lack of BAU resource presents. • Planning permission and/or building regulations may be refused. • Space designated to the Centre may be needed for additional bed capacity for Hillside Care Home to meet winter pressures (winter 2020/21). This is a temporary measure in response to Covid-19. There is a low risk, but would mean that the project delivery schedule and opening would potentially be delayed. • Whilst the council is not intending to dispose of the whole of its interest in Hillside, by utilising a section of the property for the purposes of an Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre, the council could be accused of ceasing to allow the use of the Property by the Primary Care Trust (or successor) for the Permitted Use, or, being in substantial and persistent breach of the terms of the Memorandum of Grant. This financial risk attached to the Legal Charge remains and as all attempts to mitigate or remove that risk via negotiations with NHSE have failed, in the event that NHSE seek to invoke rights as a Chargee, litigation is a distinct possibility and must be borne in mind. It is acknowledged that there are legal risks with proceeding with the development of Hillside which will require further investigation and consideration as the project progresses. It is suggested that we obtain further legal advice on the legacy financial issues attached to Hillside and thereafter if appropriate that NHSE will be sent a letter confirming that we have now refurbished Hillside at a cost of approximately £700,000 and intend to enhance the premises further – with a further capital investment of up to £500,000. The capital investment enabling us to operate the site as a residential care home as we have done since May 2020. In the same letter we will confirm that we see this as a conclusion to our previous discussions with NHSE regarding these matters.
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Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete design in-house: a design option was created in-house during the latter parts of 2020. However, it was felt that the potential of the Centre had not been realised and did not fully take into account all stakeholder needs. The decision of the Programme Sponsor was to seek an external provider in order to ensure the potential of the centre is fully realised. • Alternative provider: The above provider has been selected following an open tender. Other providers have been evaluated and submissions rejected based on an open and transparent selection process. • Do nothing: In order to develop the Centre, a design is required. Therefore, to do nothing would only be considered an option if the Independent Living Demonstration and Assessment Centre project were to cease.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None made.

Signed: Stephen Vickers Date: 22 March 2021