

Item No. 12	Classification: Open	Date: 6 March 2007	Meeting Name: Executive
Report title:		Redevelopment at Rye Oak Primary School to form Children's Centre	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		The Lane	
From:		Strategic Director of Children's Services	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That Executive agrees to the relocation of childcare services from Nunhead Green Early Years Centre (EYC) to Rye Oak Primary School and Children's Centre creating a comprehensive Children's Centre at Rye Oak Primary School, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of funding, consultations and planning matters.
2. That Executive notes that, upon conclusion of the relocation of childcare services into the proposed development at Rye Oak Primary School, property assets at Rye Oak Primary School and Nunhead Green EYC may be declared surplus to the Children's Services Department's needs.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Children's Centres Programme

3. The Children's Centres programme is a national initiative to improve the quality and accessibility of childcare and to provide integrated services to support education, health, family and work. The full core offer of a Children's Centre comprises the following services:-
 - A full time day nursery offering childcare and education to children from 0– 4, including a network of childminders;
 - Family support to parents in the surrounding area;
 - Health services, including specialist and general health care for young children;
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services; and
 - Linkage to employment services through Job Centre Plus.
4. In developing the original plan, Sure Start Local Programmes were expected to establish physical Centres such that they were able to serve 800 children under the age of five in the geographical areas of greatest need. Outside of the areas of greatest need the extent of services can be adapted to the needs of the community concerned. In order to reach all children in the borough, taking account of the above expectations, we estimate that up to 21 Centres may be required in Southwark.
5. The Children's Centres programme is being delivered in three phases and has the following targets set by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES):-

- Phase 1 (2004 to 2006) 12 Centres
- Phase 2 (2006 to 2008) 9 Centres
- Phase 3 (2008 to 2010) Target completed in phases 1 & 2

6. The Executive approved the strategies for Phases 1 and 2 of the programme at their meetings held on 4 November 2003 and 11 October 2005, respectively. The first phase has been completed and officers are undertaking technical assessments for potential second phase Centres.
7. The phase 2 work has been delayed because of late changes to the guidance which was not issued by the DfES until August 2006. The new guidance places a greater emphasis on sustainability and integration with the extended schools programme and less emphasis on creating childcare places. A further report detailing how phase 2 will be implemented is on the forward plan for Executive for May 2007. The proposals contained in this report are consistent with the emphasis in the guidance on sustainability and with the report "Early Years Review – agreeing the strategic approach to delivery of early years services" which was considered by the Executive on 30 January 2007.
8. The proposal here to merge existing services at Rye Oak Primary School and Nunhead Green EYC to form a comprehensive Children's Centre facility will make the council's childcare services in the Nunhead and Peckham Rye area more sustainable and will address the issue of poor quality buildings at Nunhead Green EYC.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Rye Oak School

9. Three years ago Peckham Rye Primary School was placed in special measures. As closure of the school was not an option, the DfES approved the school for a "Fresh Start". The school was renamed Rye Oak School and received considerable additional capital investment. £386,000 of the DfES capital allocation for Fresh Start has been set aside to support the works within the scheme proposed here.
10. At present, Rye Oak School has an Adult Education facility in the centre of the school grounds. Following discussions with the Adult Education Service it was agreed that the specialist courses that were delivered in the building within the Rye Oak grounds would be relocated to the Thomas Carlton Centre. As a result, it is now possible to demolish the unsuitable old buildings and to use the vacated space to develop new buildings to create a fit-for-purpose school/children's centre.

Nunhead Green EYC

11. In common with a number of Early Years Centres, Nunhead Green has experienced a variable take-up of daycare places, particularly for 3 and 4 year olds. Consolidation of the provision on the Rye Oak site will enable us to rationalise provision for 3 and 4 year olds and ensure that there are sufficient places across 0-5 year olds within the area.

12. Additionally, the Nunhead Green EYC facility needs substantial investment in its buildings. Immediate building condition issues could be remedied for a cost of approximately £285,000. However, the building is nearing the end of its economic life and a replacement building will cost in the range of £870,000 to £1,440,000 depending on the type of building.

The Lane Children's Centre

13. Rye Oak Primary School and Nunhead Green Early Years Centre together form The Lane Children's Centre; designated a phase 1 Children's Centre in March 2006. Rye Oak is the main point of service delivery providing 110 full time equivalent (FTE) places for children aged 3 to 5; a breakfast club for extended daycare; a group training facility with crèche; and workstations for partner services. However, service delivery could be improved by establishing a more coherent layout on the site bringing related service areas together.
14. Nunhead Green Early Years Centre is located within 200m of Rye Oak. It contributes to the Children's Centre partnership with Rye Oak through the provision of 55 FTE places for children aged 6 months to 4 years with most places being filled by children under three years old.

Redevelopment Proposal

15. In view of the unsatisfactory state of the buildings at Rye Oak and Nunhead Green and the consequential impact on the provision of childcare, education and sustainability, it is proposed that a scheme of redevelopment is undertaken which will comprise:-
 - Demolishing some building structures on the Rye Oak site;
 - Developing a 2000 square metre extension to the main teaching block at Rye Oak Primary School providing:-
 - 183 place Children's Centre including consultation suite, multi-agency office suite, group training rooms and crèche;
 - New main entrance serving all facilities on the site including a single reception area;
 - New integrated administration, management, and staff facilities;
 - Community and extended day facilities;
 - Improved access and security;
 - Improved ICT facilities supporting integrated working;
 - Improved external play facilities;
 - Refitted kitchen to deliver on the healthy eating agenda; and
 - Improved sustainability, using less energy and resources.
 - Transfer of childcare service from Nunhead Green EYC to new facilities at Rye Oak.
16. It is anticipated that following the proposed redevelopment, the Children's Services Department will be able to declare the nursery site at Rye Oak and the Nunhead Green EYC site surplus to requirements.

External Funding Opportunities

17. A key consideration for this scheme is the opportunity to access capital funding from the second phase (2006/2008) of the Children's Centres programme. It is proposed that this resource should provide 17% of the capital funding

(£950,000). Initial proposals have been drawn up and the project is currently undergoing architectural and financial assessments by DfES consultants prior to formal submission of a bid and agreement to release funding. Any grant money made available will need to be spent by the end of March 2008. Consequently, the project is working to a tight timescale, and building works will need to start on site in summer 2007.

18. Another significant external funding resource for the project is the capital support for Fresh Start provided by the DfES, as detailed in paragraph 9 above. Subject to member approval of this report, it is proposed to make an additional bid for Fresh Start capital that will increase this resource by £800,000 to provide 24% of the overall capital funding. There is no formal spending deadline for Fresh Start funding but as the purpose is to support the school's transformation we need to make progress as soon as possible.
19. Formal agreement to the funding identified in paragraphs 17 and 18 has yet to be secured. In order to enable officers to commission work immediately agreement has been reached, Executive is being asked to approve recommendation 1 of this report "subject to the satisfactory conclusion of funding, consultation and planning matters". Subject to agreement to the recommendations in this report, ongoing Gateway approvals for the project are likely to be managed through the Chief Officer decision making process.

Programme

23. The programme for the project is dictated by two considerations:-
 - The spend date of March 2008 for Children's Centres funds; and
 - The benefit of starting the project in the 2007 school summer holiday period when demolition work and site establishment operations can be undertaken without disruption to the school.

The pre and post contract works have been assessed and show that the project can be delivered between summer 2007 and summer 2008 subject to the planning process.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

24. The Southwark Children and Young People's Plan includes a priority of taking forward the 'Co-ordinated development of community networks, extended schools and Children's Centres'. The Rye Oak project will contribute towards this priority by enhancing the capacity of the School to operate as an Extended School and Children's Centre, linking in to a network of integrated provision across the Nunhead and Peckham Rye area.
25. The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to work together with partners to ensure early childhood services are integrated to maximise access and benefits to families, in order to improve outcomes for young children. The Rye Oak project is in line with this policy direction, enabling improved access to a range of services on one site.
26. The Children's Centre programme contributes to delivery of Council priorities in a number of ways. In particular:

- The childcare element is designed such that it assists parents/carers in getting into work which has a positive impact on economic well-being. Good quality childcare also makes a significant contribution to children's educational outcomes.
- Services delivered through Children's Centres support healthy living for children and their families. The centres promote improved access to the full range of services delivered to children and their families including those that promote healthy living and early identification and support for additional social or educational needs.
- The new buildings will be designed to meet the council's current policies in respect of sustainability.

Community Impact Statement

27. This rationalisation of provision will enable an additional 18 childcare places to be created benefiting the local community.
28. The scheme will provide community facilities for a variety of adult learning classes such as cooking, art and IT, as well as a venue for community groups to meet.
29. The new build elements of the scheme will comply fully with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements. The existing teaching block will also benefit from the provision of a ramped access into the ground floor of the existing teaching block and the incorporation of a lift.
30. The impact of the proposed development will be assessed through the usual planning procedures. It is anticipated that there will not be an adverse impact.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Revenue Implications

33. Rye Oak primary school receives a delegated school budget share funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant. This proposal would have no impact on the school's budget share which is based on the largely pupil related Southwark formula. Nunhead Green Early Years Centre is funded by the Council, although it is supported from the Schools Budget / Dedicated Schools Grant as it delivers minimum free entitlement to nursery education to 3 and 4 year olds. Under this proposal, the revenue budget for Nunhead Green (£0.3m 2007-08) would transfer to the Children's Centre. However, future funding will be reviewed as part of strategic approach agreed for delivery of Early Years provision by the Executive in January. There are, therefore, no revenue implications from this proposal at this point in time and service delivery as outlined in this report will be contained within existing revenue budgets.
34. However it will be important that, in managing Rye Oak Primary School and Children's Centre, robust accounting arrangements are in place to ensure that the Council can continue to meet statutory reporting requirements.

Capital Implications

31. Feasibility work on the scheme has established that a capital budget of £5,536,000 is required. Included in this sum is a contingency budget equivalent to

7.5% of the overall cost and provision for inflation. Executive approved the inclusion of £3.2m corporate resources for this proposal at their meeting on 13 February. However, as identified in the body of this report, it is anticipated that the balance (£2.336m) of the estimated cost of this proposal will be met from grant funding which is not yet secure.

Children's Centres 2006/2008 capital (para 17)	£950,000
Fresh Start capital (para 9)	£386,000
Additional Fresh Start capital (para 18)	<u>£800,000</u>
	£2,136,000

In addition, it is proposed that some £200,000 of the DfES Primary School Modernisation fund be allocated to this project.

Should members approve this proposal, implementation will be dependant on adherence to the governance arrangements reported to Executive on 13 February. The governance arrangements specify that, where a capital project is dependant on external funding in whole or in part, confirmation is provided to the Finance Director that the external funding has been secured before contractually binding arrangements are entered into.

CONSULTATION

35. Consultation on the design of the Children's Centre has been carried out with representatives of Rye Oak Primary School, Nunhead Green EYC, Education Play Service and Children's Centre practitioners.
36. A full process of consultation with the following groups will occur if the Executive approve this report:-
- Rye Oak staff, parents and children
 - Nunhead Green staff, parents and children
 - Play service staff, parents and children
 - Immediate residents
 - Children Centre practitioners and partners

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Architect's RIBA Stage D report	Education Property Team	Nick Kubale 020 7525 5309
Quantity Survey's RIBA Stage D report	Education Property Team	Nick Kubale 020 7525 5309

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

This section must be included in all reports.

Lead Officer	Romi Bowen, Strategic Director of Children's Services	
Report Author	Mike Smith, Assistant Director: Community Services	
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CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor	Yes	No
Finance Director	Yes	No
List other officers here		
Executive Member	Yes	Yes
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