



LEAD MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

DECISIONS to be made by the Lead Member for Resources,
Councillor Nick Bennett

WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2020 AT 10.00 AM

COMMITTEE ROOM - COUNTY HALL, LEWES

AGENDA

- 1 Decisions made by the Lead Cabinet Member on 28 January 2020 (*Pages 3 - 6*)
- 2 Disclosure of Interests
Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Members regard the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct
- 3 Urgent items
Notification of any items which the Lead Member considers urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda.
- 4 Ringmer Children's Centre (*Pages 7 - 12*)
Report by the Director of Children's Services
- 5 Any urgent items previously notified under agenda item 3

PHILIP BAKER
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3 March 2020

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LEAD MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Nick Bennett, on 28 January 2020 at County Hall, Lewes

Councillor Philip Daniel spoke on items 8 and 12 (see minutes 30 and 33)

24 DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 10 DECEMBER 2019

24.1 The Lead Member RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2019 as a correct record.

25 REPORTS

25.1 Reports referred to in the minutes below are contained in the minute book.

26 PETITION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

26.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

26.2 The Lead Petitioner, Ms Julia Hilton, spoke about the petition, including references to a carbon reduction pathway and representatives on the Environment Board.

DECISION

26.3 The Lead Member RESOLVED to advise the petitioners (1) that the majority of the actions requested by the petition are already being implemented/planned for by the County Council; and

(2) why the County Council has set a target for achieving carbon neutrality from its activities by 2050, but not 2030.

Reasons

26.4 The County Council did not set a target for 2030 because the Committee on Climate Change, which provides independent advice to government, concluded in May 2019 that a commitment to reaching net zero emissions earlier than 2050 is not credible.

26.5 The County Council is a partner on the East Sussex Environment Board, which has set a long term aim for the county to be carbon neutral by 2050 or earlier. The Board includes the environmental regulators, the two universities, and representatives of land managers, farmers, local authorities and businesses.

27 CARBON REDUCTION OPPORTUNITIES: ICHOOSR AND WARMER SUSSEX SCHEMES FOR RESIDENTS

27.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

DECISION

27.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to (1) note the details of the iChoosr and Warmer Sussex energy schemes; and

(2) agree that the County Council supports and promotes the iChoosr and Warmer Sussex schemes.

Reasons

27.3 The 'Sussex Solar Together' and 'Warmer Sussex' schemes are timely, in view of the County Council's recent declaration of a Climate Change Emergency. They provide a low and no-cost means for the County Council to support local residents to take practical action to cut their energy bills and carbon footprint, and build on our partnership work with other Local Authorities across Sussex to deliver measurable change.

28 STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2025

28.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer.

DECISION

28.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to endorse the County Council's revised Strategic Asset Plan for the period 2020-25 and approve its publication.

Reasons

28.3 The revised Strategic Asset Plan provides a refresh and a new set of actions to support operational activities and service improvement. It remains a "live" document so will continue to be updated as targets and actions plans are met.

29 FUTURE OPTIONS FOR DE-DESIGNATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES - CROWBOROUGH CHILDREN'S CENTRE

29.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services, together with exempt information contained in a later agenda item.

DECISIONS

29.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to (1) enter into a Deed of Variation of the existing 125 year school lease with Beacon Academy to incorporate the Children's Centre building under the same terms as the rest of the site; and.

(2) Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to conclude terms in accordance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reasons

29.3 Beacon Academy have agreed in principle to take on management of the building and to become the landlords to Tiddlers Nursery. Tiddlers nursery remaining on site should be strong evidence to the Department for Education that the continued early years offer is reasonable. This proposal has the potential of securing the continuation of the service whilst removing an ongoing duty on the County Council.

30 FUTURE OPTIONS FOR DE-DESIGNATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES - RINGMER CHILDREN'S CENTRE

30.1 The Lead Member considered a request to defer consideration of the report, in the light of correspondence received from Lewes District Council and Ringmer Parish Council.

DECISIONS

30.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to defer consideration of the matter until the Lead Member meeting scheduled to be held on 3 March 2020.

31 FUTURE OPTIONS FOR DE-DESIGNATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES - RYE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

31.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services, together with exempt information contained in a later agenda item.

DECISIONS

31.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to (1) enter a Deed of Variation of the existing 125 year school lease with Rye Academy Aquinas Trust to incorporate the Children's Centre building under the same terms as the rest of the site; and

(2) delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to conclude terms in accordance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reasons

31.3 Aquinas Trust have expressed interest in taking on the management of the Children's Centre building with a plan to augment their early years offer. The proposal has the potential of securing the continuation of the service while removing an ongoing duty on the County Council.

32 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

32.1 RESOLVED to exclude the public and press for the remaining agenda items on the grounds that if the public and press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

33 FUTURE OPTIONS FOR DE-DESIGNATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES

33.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services.

DECISION

33.2 RESOLVED to note the information.

Reasons

33.3 The information supported earlier agenda items.

Report to	Lead Member for Resources
Date:	11 March 2020
Title of Report:	Ringmer Children's Centre
By:	Director of Children's Services
Purpose of Report:	Declare the Ringmer Children's Centre building surplus to the County Council's operational requirements to support the Children's Services Early Help Strategy but with a proposal to pursue occupational terms with public sector key stakeholders

RECOMMENDATION: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) declare the Ringmer Children's Centre building surplus to the County Council's operational requirements;**
 - 2) delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to enter into negotiations with appropriate parties to agree occupational and management arrangements for the Children's Centre to enable its formal de designation; and**
 - 3) delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to secure best value terms for disposal or lease in accordance with S.123 of the Local Government Act 1972.**
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1. Background information

1.1 The Ringmer Children's Centre is a purpose-built building sitting on the perimeter of the Kings Academy Site in Ringmer. It is held freehold by ESCC. The building has a separate entrance and parking away from the Academy site.

1.2 The building was built using a Surestart Capital Grant with the mandated expectation that it be used for 25 years following the award of the grant for the purposes of early years (0-5) provision.

1.3 The Department for Education (DfE) are responsible for overseeing centres funded by Surestart Capital Grants and for approving their usage or de-designation.

1.4 On 7 October 2019 the Lead Member for Children and Families agreed to apply for the de-designation of the building on the basis that ongoing use of the building could be made by another party that complies with the terms of the grant.

The DfE decide whether to waive a request for clawback of grants based on evidence of ongoing early years activity.

1.5 In exploring future use options, initial discussions were held with the Kings Academy but they declined any further interest.

1.6 Discussions have been held with key public sector stakeholders on them possibly taking over the management of the Centre with the aim to continue the early years offer. Terms are not yet finalised and further stakeholder consultations are in hand, which include with District and Parish Councils, the NHS and with other community bodies for the provision of groups and other interventions. These uses are, we understand, able to ensure compliance with the original grant and mitigate risks of clawback for ESCC.

1.7 The proposition going forward is to:

- i) Declare the building surplus to the County Council's operational needs
- ii) Enter into discussions on occupational and service management arrangements with one or more public sector lead partners.
- iii) Delegate final terms to the Chief Operating Officer acting with the Director of Children's Services.
- iv) Subject to the above to seek de-designation of the Centre by written submission to the DfE.

2. Supporting information

2.1 A Location plan of the Ringmer Children's Centre site is attached in Appendix 1.

2.2 Local members were notified during the consultation of the intention to de-designate the Children's Centre.

2.3 The Children's Centre was originally designated in 2009. The original grant was £461k under a 25 year arrangement and thus 14 years remain. If the DfE assess that the aim of the grant is not being met there is a risk to ESCC of some clawback, so it is sensible for ESCC to outline to the DfE's satisfaction what ongoing early years activity will look like in the building and thus mitigate the risk of clawback.

3 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

3.1 The revised Early Help Strategy reduced the number of centres that the service required to deliver the service going forward. This was agreed by the Lead Member for Children and Families on 7 October 2019. As a result, a number of Children's Centres, including Ringmer, were identified for de-designation. The outline proposal noted above has the potential of securing the continuation of the service whilst removing an ongoing duty on the County Council.

3.2 The Lead Member for Resources is asked to support this proposition to secure best value outcomes

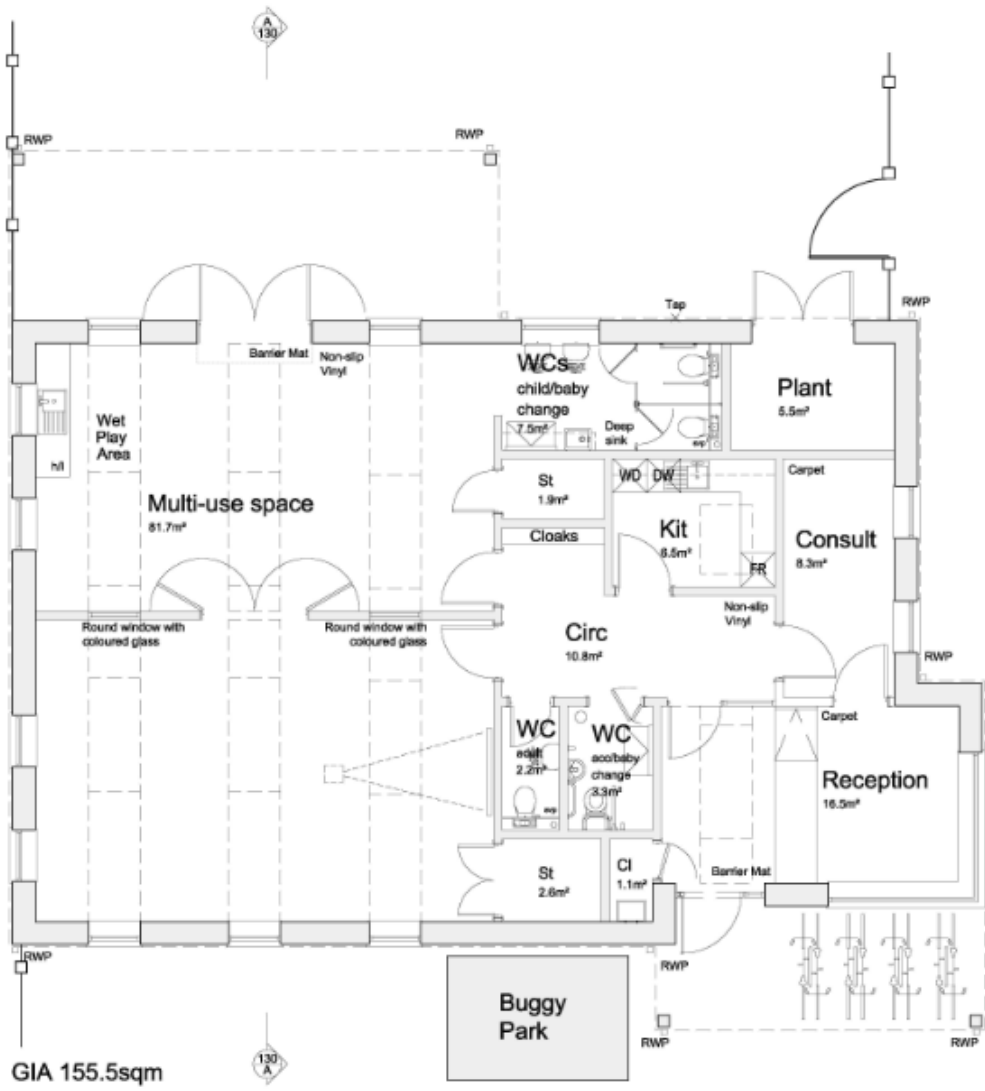
STUART GALLIMORE

Director of Children's Services.

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Appendix 1A The Building plan for Ringmer Children's Centre



Appendix 1B Map of the Academy Site and Children's Centre

