

**Report to:** Lead Member for Resources

**Date of meeting:** 14 July 2020

**By:** Chief Operating Officer

**Title:** 14 Westfield Lane, St Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 7NG

**Purpose:** To formally record Lead Member approval to reverse the decision to declare the asset surplus to operational requirement

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***RECOMMENDATIONS:*** The Lead Member is recommended to:

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- 1) Record for administrative purposes that the previous surplus declaration decision made on 22 January 2019 be reversed, to enable use and occupation by Children Services in accordance with the business plan subsequently approved**
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**1 Background**

- 1.1 14 Westfield Lane is one of a number of Learning Disability homes that transferred to the County Council from former Primary Care Trusts (PCT) in February 2011. The County Council was provided with capital funding, required to acquire the freehold interests, subject to the PCT (and their successors NHS England) retaining a first charge over each asset. The capital grant is repayable on future disposal.
- 1.2 On 28 November 2011 the Lead Member for Community and Resources approved a decision to formally declare the site, known as 14 Westfield Lane Hastings, as surplus to operational requirements. In addition it recommended disposal, by way of a lease, to a Registered Care Provider for the purpose of developing the site for supported living accommodation.
- 1.3 Despite subsequent proposals to convert the asset into 10-12 supported living units, development became frustrated by the restrictions of the first charge held over the asset by NHS England, despite extensive negotiations. In June 2018, Cabinet agreed to amend Learning Disability Provided Services, through which the site was identified as now fully surplus.
- 1.4 Following further reviews, a business proposal was put to Members via the Capital and Strategic Asset Board which approved the refurbishment of the building for use as a home for looked after children, to add provision for care and safeguarding of this vulnerable client base, subject to planning and regulatory approvals. Contracts to commence refurbishment works are now in place, and to ensure clarity of governance it has been recommended that this Report be formally published to record the subsequent change in proposals.

**2 Supporting information**

- 2.1 The property was a registered care home for residents with learning disabilities who were supported by teams of residential care workers. The service closed and the building was vacated in 2011 and has not been used operationally since.

- 2.2 Hastings and Rother Primary Care Trust transferred the freehold to ESCC in 2011 under a directive issued by the Department of Health.
- 2.3 The site measures 0.8 acres and is shown on the accompanying map hatched in black.
- 2.4 The Local Member has been consulted and has no objections.
- 2.5 The property remains subject to a capital grant agreement with the NHS, under which the authority commits to use the asset for the wellbeing of specific clients with care needs.

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

- 3.1 Earlier decisions not to secure the asset for specialist care use have been further reviewed and amended by Services.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the decision to declare the asset surplus to County Council requirements be reversed and the reasons set out herein recorded.

**KEVIN FOSTER**  
**Chief Operating Officer**

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### LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Peter Pragnell

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendix I – Site Plan (not to scale)



