



Derby City Council

**Council Cabinet**  
**14 November 2018**

Report of the Strategic Director of Corporate  
Resources

**ITEM 12**

## **The Relocation of the Library Service Provision at Pear Tree Library**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 At its meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017, Cabinet approved as part of the new service delivery model, five libraries to be operated directly by the Council. Pear Tree Library was included within this offer.
- 1.2 To support the delivery of the Council's new service model, work commenced to undertake remedial works on the roof at Pear Tree Library in April 2018. To allow adequate time for these works to be undertaken the Library was closed for an estimated 2 month period.
- 1.3 Soon after the works to the library roof commenced, several structural defects were revealed. In order to remedy the issues, contractors estimated that these works would cost in the region of £1.5m and take at least 12 months to complete. Pending further investigations the Library has remained closed.
- 1.4 An option appraisal has been undertaken to identify which outcome would be most viable: to undertake the works on the Pear Tree Library building, or to re-locate the library on a permanent basis. The preferred option is the latter, which has identified the underutilised St Augustine's Community Centre as a suitable alternative property. Capital works to St Augustine's Community Centre will be required to facilitate the conversion.
- 1.5 This option also allows the Council to relocate a youth services team from the nearby Madeley Centre, a building which is currently significantly underutilised and in a poor condition, into St Augustine's Community Centre.
- 1.6 The new location would provide a better library at an estimated half the cost of repairing the current facility. It would also take significantly less time to implement and would benefit from increased footfall by bringing community services to one location
- 1.7 St Augustine's Community Centre is half a mile from Pear Tree Library and benefits from a significantly larger floor area and plenty of transport links. The new facility will combine the existing activities and services within the community centre and Madeley Centre with the new library, creating a 'community hub'.
- 1.8 The total cost of works to St Augustine's Community Centre, to develop a suitable library space on the ground floor and community hub on the upper floor, is estimated to be £700K, which is less than half the cost repairing the existing building. This urgent

and priority project will be funded through a review of the Property Improvement Capital Programme.

- 1.9 It is proposed that the conversion works commence in March 2019 and will take approximately 2 months to complete allowing the new facility to be opened in May 2019, significantly less time than it would take to complete the building work on the existing building (12 months)
- 1.10 The cost of operating the one, bigger facility, rather than two smaller facilities, will result in a broadly neutral revenue effect on the Council.
- 1.11 The subsequently vacated Pear Tree Library building and Madeley Centre are to be declared surplus and marketed as a priority, ensuring that holding costs and associated liabilities are mitigated and extinguished as quickly as possible.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To approve the relocation of the library service currently based at Pear Tree Library to St Augustine's Community Centre and to agree to the development of the St Augustine's Community Centre as a community hub.
- 2.2 To approve the relocation of services currently delivered at the Madeley Centre into St Augustine's Community Centre.
- 2.3 To include an item on the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Capital Programme relating to the conversion of St Augustine's Community Centre.
- 2.4 To delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources following consultation with the Strategic Director of Communities and Place to agree the final design of the works to St Augustine's Community Centre and to approve and enter into all relevant contracts associated with the conversion of St Augustine's Community Centre as a community hub.
- 2.5 To declare the buildings currently accommodating the Pear Tree Library and the Madeley Centre, surplus to requirements and approve their addition to the property disposals programme.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 To ensure that a library service provision within the locality is restored as soon as possible as well as increasing the amount of services offered within the community
- 3.2 It provides a permanent and accessible alternative to the current Pear Tree Library building
- 3.3 To enable the proposed conversion works to St Augustine's Community Centre to

proceed in a timely manner and to assist the Council to make the most of their property assets by increasing the use of a significantly underutilised building.

- 3.4 To ensure that property assets have the relevant authority to be released as efficiently as possible in line with the principles of the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan and Property Rationalisation Programme. This will ensure that liabilities / costs associated with vacant properties in poor repair are extinguished as soon as possible.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 Under the Council's approved Library Strategy, Pear Tree Library was identified as a library that would be operated directly by the Council.
- 4.2 Funding was set aside in the 2018/2019 Capital Programme to enable improvement to be made regarding the facilities at the premises. At the same time, it was planned to undertake some scheduled maintenance works to the fabric of the building.
- 4.3 The building closed in April 2018 to allow these works to take place. During the undertaking of these works severe structural defects were uncovered which resulted in the building not being able to be reopened in June 2018 as planned; the building remains closed.
- 4.4 It has been established that the remedial works required to Pear Tree Library will cost approximately £1.5m and take at least 12 months to complete.
- 4.5 Given the cost of repairing the building and timescale involved in undertaking the repairs, an option appraisal was undertaken to establish a preferred option from which to deliver a library service within the locality. Speed of delivery, cost and a preference for a single move were the main selection criteria for the options appraisal.
- 4.6 The option appraisal generated the following outcomes:-
- It was not considered viable to undertake the works to the Pear Tree building given the cost and timescale involved.
  - The preferred option was to re-locate the library service to the St Augustine's Community Centre on a permanent basis.

### **St Augustine's Community Centre**

- 4.7 Built in 1908, St Augustine's Community Centre (see the photograph in Appendix 2) is a two story property situated approximately 10-15 mins walk west of Pear Tree Library (see the location plan in Appendix 3) in a predominantly residential area. There is no car park attached to the building but most users of the current Library get there without a car or use public transport by which the Centre is very well served. There are areas of double yellow lines where blue badge users can park, as long as it's safe to do so.

- 4.8 The property has a significantly larger floor area than the existing Pear Tree Library and benefits from a lift to the first floor which the current building lacks. It is proposed that the Library provision would be situated on the ground floor.
- 4.9 St Augustine's is currently leased to the Trustees of St Augustine's Community Centre and is significantly under-utilised. Under the terms of the lease the Council is responsible for the majority of repairs to the building. Following discussions, the tenants have indicated that they are prepared to surrender their lease on the building subject to some community provision being retained in the building.
- 4.10 Surveys undertaken to date have confirmed the structural integrity of the building and that it is capable of undergoing the alterations and refurbishment required to ensure it is fit for the purpose of not only delivering library provision but a wide range of Council and community activities.
- 4.11 As part of the Property Rationalisation process the nearby Madeley Centre, which is used to support the delivery of the Council's youth service objectives, has been identified as a building which is underutilised, has a significant back log of repairs and is no longer fit for that purpose. The Service has confirmed the need to relocate from the Madeley Centre and are satisfied with the option of delivering services from St Augustine's.
- 4.12 The estimated cost of undertaking works to enable the St. Augustine's building to be utilised, is approximately £700,000. This figure includes:-
- The cost of works to improve the physical structure of the building
  - Mechanical and electrical equipment
  - Internal reconfiguration and fitting out to enable relocation of the library
  - Internal reconfiguration and fitting out to create community spaces on the upper floor and enable relocation of the youth service from the Madeley Community Centre.
  - Provision of Wi-Fi and IT links
  - Additional facilities to maximise accessibility of the building
  - Library removal and relocation costs
- 4.13 These works can be funded through the existing Capital Budget, including re-allocation of budgets in the Property Improvement Capital Programme.
- 4.14 It is proposed to combine the operational revenue budget of the current Pear Tree Library building and the Madeley Centre to create the operational revenue budget for the new facility. In addition, any income generated through the hiring of the building for community use will be used to offset the running cost of the facility.
- 4.15 It is proposed that the St Augustine's building will be directly operated by the Council. A management steering group will be created made up of Council Officers and representatives from the community, including the St Augustine's Community Association Trust. This group will provide a steer community use of the building and advise on the development programme of community events etc. The finer details of this proposal will be worked through over the coming months.

4.16 The benefits of this proposals are:-

- It provides a fit for purpose permanent alternative to the current Pear Tree Library building, to ensure the provision of library services within the locality.
- It brings back into use a significantly underutilised building within the Council's portfolio.
- It allows for the rationalisation of the Council's portfolio in the area and the removal of significant ongoing liabilities. Children and Younger People (CYP) have indicated they would be prepared to relinquish the Madeley Centre to re-locate to St Augustine's (Madeley Centre is a building with a significant back log of repairs which is no longer fit for purpose for Council use). The Council's Communities team have also expressed interest in delivering services from St Augustine's.
- It maintains and improves an important community provision within the locality supporting the Council's objectives in regard to integration, equality and diversity.
- The projected cost are of implementing the proposal is considerably less than the cost of repairing the existing Pear Tree Library building

4.17 It is proposed that the conversion works commence in March 2019 and will take approximately 2 months to complete allowing the new facility to be opened in May 2019.

4.18 Once the Pear Tree Library building and the Madeley Centre are vacated they will be added to the property disposals programme and marketed as a matter of priority.

#### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 Cease providing a library service in this part of the City. This option was not pursued as it would be contrary to the Library Needs Assessment which formed a key part in the formulation of the Council's Library strategy.

5.2 The other alternative locations considered as part of the options appraisal exercise are shown in Appendix 3.

**This report has been approved by the following officers:**

<b>Legal officer</b>	Emily Feenan, Principal Lawyer
<b>Financial officer</b>	Toni Nash
<b>Human Resources officer</b>	Zoe Bird
<b>Estates/Property officer</b>	Jayne Sowerby–Warrington, Head of Strategic Asset Management and Estates
<b>Service Director(s)</b>	Dinesh Kotecha, Director of Property Claire Davenport, Director of Leisure and Culture
<b>Other(s)</b>	

<b>For more information contact:</b>	John Sadler, Strategic Asset Manager, 01332 643334, John.Sadler@derby.gov.uk
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 - Implications Appendix 2 - Photograph of St Augustine's Community Centre Appendix 3 - Location plan of St Augustine's Community Centre

## IMPLICATIONS

### Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The total capital cost for this project is estimated to be £700K. This item will need to be included in 2018/19 and 2019/20 Capital programme. The project will be funded through the reallocation of money in the Property Improvement Capital Programme and the release of £180,000 that was set aside several years ago to offset a potential claw back of grant associated with a building located in the Pear Tree area sold by the Council 5 years ago.
- 1.2 The cost of operating the new facility will be met through reallocation of the operating revenue budgets from the Pear Tree Library and the Madeley Centre thus creating broadly neutral revenue affect to the Council.

### Legal

- 2.1 Legal Services will advise on the terms of the lease surrender by the Trustees of St Augustine's Community Centre and all other contractual/legal documentation associated with this project.

### Personnel

- 3.1 The staffing impact is being dealt with under the wider libraries review and consultation will be undertaken with any staff affected.

### IT

- 4.1 The necessary IT infrastructure to support the delivery of various services from the building is being incorporated into the final design of the scheme.
- 4.2 The remaining IT infrastructure within the existing Pear Tree Library will be removed and re-used where possible.

### Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Recognising that the building will need to be accessible to all users, an Equalities Impact Assessment is being undertaken, involving the Council's Equality Hubs and Forums, the result of which will be reflected in final design of the scheme.

### Health and Safety

- 6.1 The closure of and subsequent disposal of the Pear Tree Library Building will reduce the Council's Health and Safety Risk associated with the management of vacant buildings.

- 6.2 The relocation of the services and the work to be carried out at St Augustine's will be subject to the necessary risk assessments and method statements.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 7.1 The disposal of surplus buildings will allow redundant buildings to be put back into economic use and assist in the regeneration of the surrounding areas.

### **Property and Asset Management**

- 8.1 The relevant Property and Asset Management comments are incorporated into the report.

### **Risk Management and Safeguarding**

- 9.1 The Relocation of the Library Service Provision will result in the disposal of two assets that are reported to be in poor condition. The removal of these assets will generate savings in insurance premiums and will also improve the risk exposure of the Council's property portfolio making it more attractive to insurers. Properties in poor condition are higher risk as disrepair can lead to further property damage as well as posing Health and Safety risks to employees and third parties.
- 9.2 St Augustine's Community Centre is currently insured under the Council's Commercial property schedule which means the Council insure the buildings and loss of rent. There is no provision for contents under this policy. If the lease is terminated and the Council is no longer in receipt of rent and instead becomes responsible for the building and contents the Insurance team will be notified in order for the asset to be transferred to the General Property Schedule which provides cover for both buildings and contents but not loss of rent.

### **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 10.1 These proposals will ensure the continuity of Library provision to the Pear Tree and surrounding areas of the City.
- 10.2 Disposal of surplus property and the subsequent maintenance savings will contribute towards the required budget savings for the period of 2013-2016.

**Appendix 2**  
**Photograph of St Augustine's Community Centre**



## Appendix 3 Location Plan of St Augustine's Community Centre

