

Adult Learning Service Future Accommodation – Rycote Centre

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To approve the permanent relocation of the Adult Learning Service to the Rycote Centre following the closure of St Helen's House.
- 1.2 To approve a budget virement of £32,000 from Social Services to Corporate Services Property Services to fund the on-going running costs.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 St Helen's House will no longer be available for use by the Adult Learning Service from August 2004.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 18 May 2004, Council Cabinet approved the temporary relocation of the Adult Learning Service to the Rycote Centre on a shared occupation basis with Leonard Cheshire Foundation and Derby Deaf Club.
- 2.3 Approval for the permanent relocation of the ALS to the Rycote Centre will provide a long-term central base and enable the ALS to apply to Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council for capital funding for appropriate refurbishment.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 From September 2004, a range of Adult Learning provision will be available at the Rycote Centre. The Adult Learning Service will have five-day usage of 6 classroom areas together with partial usage of four additional classroom spaces.
- 3.2 The Adult Learning Service already offers Basic Skills provision for deaf learners within the space occupied by the Deaf Club on the second floor of the building.
- 3.3 The Rycote Centre is in a city centre location and is appropriate for conversion to meet the requirements of a modern adult learning environment including crèche, cafeteria and on-site parking.

- 3.4 The Adult Learning Service is committed to working in partnership with Social Services and their preferred provider of the transitional day care service which will operate from the Rycote Centre from April 2005. Both Social Services and their current provider of transitional day care services are very positive about working with the Adult Learning Service and the potential for developing an inclusive community based environment within the Rycote Centre.
- 3.5 A bid for Minor Works funding of £10,600.00 has been made to the Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (DLSC) to create a new reception and office area for the Adult Learning Service on the first floor of the Rycote Centre, and to partition an existing classroom to create two new learning areas.
- 3.6 In addition, a bid of £50,440 has been made to DLSC for SEND/DDA funding in order to reconfigure the existing toilet facilities on the ground floor to bring them up to current SEND/DDA standards.
- 3.7 With the exception of the existing toilet facilities, disabled access to the building is excellent and there are two lifts serving the first and second floors of the building.
- 3.8 Cabinet approval for the use of the building on a permanent basis by the Adult Learning Service would enable a bid for major capital funding of £900,000 maximum to be made to the DLSC. This would allow the Adult Learning Service to refurbish the building externally and internally and to re-design floor space to create additional classrooms.
- 3.9 Whilst the future provision of adult learning by different agencies, including Derby City Council, will be subject to the LSC's Strategic Area Review over the next year, approval for the Rycote Centre to be used by the Adult Learning Service on a permanent basis would enable the service to engage in long term strategic planning.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4. The relocation of the St Helen's House programme to the Rycote Centre on a more permanent basis needs to be addressed now to avoid the uncertainties and publicity associated with the current temporary situation.

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Background papers:	Alternative Day Services for Disabled People in Derby. Report of the Director of Social Services to Council Cabinet 20 July 2004
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 The Adult Learning Service currently pays £77,000 towards the running costs of St Helens House. Offsetting this saving will be additional running costs of £25,000 at the former Allenpark Infants School site and £20,000 for rental costs of a new base in the north of the city. A payment of £32,000 to Social Services for use of the Rycote Centre would, therefore, maintain a neutral financial position for the Adult Learning Service.
- 1.2 It is estimated that the ongoing annual costs of security, energy, rates and water at St Helens House are £27,000 and together with ongoing maintenance costs, there will be additional costs falling on the Corporate Services Property Services budgets of £32,000. As the income to Social Services has not been budgeted for and will effectively be a windfall gain for Social Services, it is proposed to transfer £32,000 budget from Social Services to fund the on-going costs.
- 1.3 The Adult Learning Service budget is wholly funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and can only incur expenditure on bases where adult learning is being provided. The proposals in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 would be financially neutral for the Adult Learning Service and would ensure that running costs at St Helens House could still be funded without impacting on other corporate buildings budgets.
- 1.4 Adaptations in preparation for September 2004 will be funded from a Minor Works grant from the Learning and Skills Council.
- 1.5 If Cabinet gives approval for the relocation to be on a more permanent basis, a bid for up to £900,000 of capital funding can be made to the Learning and Skills Council.

Legal

2. None arising directly from this report.

Personnel

3. The permanent delivery of an adult learning programme comparable to that previously operating from St Helen's House will secure the employment of current Adult Learning Service staff.

Equalities

4. This approach to the delivery of adult learning opportunities will ensure that students with disabilities have the opportunity to access learning alongside their able bodied peers. The development of the Rycote Centre as an adult learning base will contribute to the achievement of targets connected with widening participation.

Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change

- 5.1 The proposal comes under the Council's objectives of job opportunities, education, protecting and supporting people, integrated cost effective services.
- 5.2 The proposal further the priorities of enhancing our community leadership role through partnership working and investing in our buildings.