

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET EXECUTIVE**

**Date: 31 July 2013**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Graham Brown  
Portfolio Holder for Youth/ Place

**SUBJECT:** Closure of Hay Youth Centre (with community use) and  
demolition to remove asbestos risk/ sale of premises.

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**REPORT FOR:** Portfolio Decision / Approval

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**Summary**

A Capita Condition report has highlighted need for £338,606 essential 1 year repair needs for youth premises, and £2,954,236 10 year. Against this background, and pending determining the overall sustainable asset strategy, short term decisions need to be taken considering those premises that do not have a longer term strategic value, and that also present short term capital threat. This approach will minimise potential for wasteful short term investment in premises (should indeed repair funds be available) that are then disposed of.

Hay Youth Centre is a dedicated Youth Service premises, and also accommodates a range of other local community activities ranging from early years/ crèche through to adult activity classes. However only Youth is directly funded/ delivered from that premises.

The building is old, and has been under threat of closure for many years during discussion of alternative new/ community build options. Agreement has now been reached to build a new combined Hay primary and community focused premises, opening 2015, and consultation has now started on that process.

The existing youth premises is in poor condition, exacerbated by a delaminating asbestos composite roof, from which asbestos contaminated moss falls regularly requiring weekly removal at an annual cost of £7600. In addition costs in the region of £45K will be incurred over the next 12 months for enacting essential and statutory maintenance and repairs.

Mindful a new community focused primary school and facility will be constructed in 2015, also recognising the scarcity of remaining repair funds, also the asbestos risk evident, it is not effective investment to commit the necessary £60K (£45K essential works, and 2 years x £7600 contaminated moss removal) required to keep the premises open for the next 2 years (at which time the new community premises should be available)

A range of premises repair options were reported to Community Services Transformation Executive Programme Board (CSTEB) including 'do nothing' through to consideration of re-roofing all or part of the premises.

However following consideration of options, agreement was reached that the recommendation to Close Hay Youth Centre was the preferred option, mindful of costs/ risks and new build commencing 2014 (opening 2015). It should be noted that the Youth Service will not cease when the building closes, but will instead move to an alternative flexible service delivery model in accordance with the new Youth Strategy, also booking space in other buildings as/ when required.

When closed, the Youth Service would declare the premises "Surplus" and the asset transfer to corporate property and may then form part of the LABV development that supports the new build school. However any disposal of the premises will require demolition/ removal of asbestos at a probable cost of £50K (EST) up until which time the Council will continue to incur asbestos cleaning costs at £150PW.

### **Proposal**

Decision is sought to approve closure of the Hay Youth Premises in September and to advise all organisations using the Hay youth premises, that the building will cease operation from the end of September 2013 and then be demolished due to cost of managing asbestos risk, and then the plot sold. In addition the Youth Service will work with the new Hay community focused premises process to ensure Youth needs are met within future Hay provision that matches the new co-location/ community hub model. Until this time alternative temporary accommodation will be required. This has been identified as the 'Bungalow' which is located within the premises of the existing Hay Primary School. A charge will be made for the use of these premises and others (e.g. to access the school hall for sport / dance activities) although this will be minimal.

### **Powys Change Plan**

Closing the Hay centre and moving toward flexible Youth delivery models is in accordance with the new Youth strategy agreed by Cabinet April 2013. In addition, the closing of the premises in the face of unaffordable premises costs will play its part in moving toward a sustainable corporate asset inventory. The closure of Hay youth premises, and subsequent incorporation of Youth (and other services) into the new 'community focused hub' will meet the new Powys service delivery plan.

### **Options Considered/Available**

Hay Option of 'do nothing' is at a cost of £60K over 2 years. Re-roofing will save the asbestos cleaning costs, but will incur an est. £70-£90K re-roofing PLUS minimum £45K statutory and repair costs. These costs when taken against premises replacement within the new Hay Community learning hub to be available in 2015, direct that the Council should minimise any further investment in the premises. This is achievable only through closure and demolition in order to

remove and manage the asbestos composite risk, and to halt further expenditure on the premises.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

To close the Youth Centre from the end of July (school term) and declare the building surplus. The bulk of the youth work delivery runs up until July, and then significantly reduces over the summer months. Any delay in closure increases risk, so the decision to close in September appears to offer opportunity to allow youth and other organisations sufficient time to consider alternative premises/ delivery models, whilst also minimising and controlling risk/ costs.

From September, Youth Services will be based at the 'Bungalow' at Hay on Wye Primary School until the new school is built, after which the service will be delivered from the community hub within the new primary school

The property will then be declared surplus (asbestos checks will continue) and then scheduled for demolition prior to sale of the plot to mitigate demolition costs (£57K).

### **Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder./Welsh Language/Other Policies etc**

The closure of the premises, mindful the Youth service will continue, does not affect these policies beyond environmental gain associated with removal of environmental risk. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed:



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### **Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing**

The early years/ pre-school services will need to relocate to other premises, however although offering a valuable resource to families in the area, these services are independent of the council and are not directly provided by Powys

### **Local Member(s)**

Evidently local members will be placed under some pressure mindful both of the impact of Hay pool (closed March 2013) and this paper seeking a decision to close Hay Youth Centre. However mindful of affordability/ risk, and that the new build communication process has started leading to construction of the new Hay Community Focused primary School, alternative new build provision will become available albeit after a 18-24 month interval.

### **Other Front Line Services**

Youth services are the only Council directly funded/ managed service operating from Hay premises. Other front line council services will therefore not be affected.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

Investigation of any access agreements with community groups, and serving of notice will need to be done with effect from the September closure. Youth Service delivery will continue, so other support services are unlikely to be affected at this time.

### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

A strong community engagement and consultation process will be undertaken (is already evident) in accordance with new build of the Hay Community Focused Learning Premises. All appropriate organisations will be encouraged to engage, and put forward their needs, thoughts and ideas.

### **Corporate Communications**

A communications strategy will be put in place:

- i) To advise Youth staff of the closure of premises and the need to move to alternative delivery models (in process now);
- ii) To advise community groups using that premises that the building will close in July 2013, to give sufficient time to consider relocation;
- iii) To feed into Hay community focused learning facilities consultation process supporting the design of the new build.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Neil Mathews/ Mike Griffiths			