

<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 05 June 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	PRU-Phase 2-Whitefield Centre-request approval to invite tenders for work in relation to the Pupil Referral Unit – Part A	
<b>Report of</b>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	

## Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet approval to invite tenders for work in relation to the Pupil Referral Unit, and specifically in relation to the PRU's Whitefield Centre building. These are phase 2 of works following the relocation of the main PRU building from Spring Lane to the New Kershaw Centre. Approval is required to proceed to tender to obtain a competitive construction price. An indicative plan and programme are appended to Part B of this paper. These will inform the design, tender process and delivery of the works to completion.
- 1.2 Given the speciality of the works, an informal benchmarking exercise has been undertaken in advance of a formal tender exercise, to help inform an appropriate budget for the works. On approval by cabinet to proceed with the Whitefield Centre project, the works will be fully market tested and independently verified via a formal tender process.
- 1.3 The Whitefield Centre works are in addition to the phase 1 works, which was given Cabinet Approval in December 2023.
- 1.4 The Whitefield Centre works will be funded from the Children's Services Capital Programme, using grant funding allocated by the Department for Education.

## Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Acceptance of the indicative budget and works programme (included in Part B of this document), and approval for the Whitefield Centre works to proceed to formal tender, using a pre-procured ESPO Framework, and subject to additional cabinet approval of the final contract sum prior to award and entering into contract with the preferred supplier/ contractor.

## Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 Approval of the works is required in order for the Whitefield Centre project to progress to tender phase. Key considerations within this document have informed both the scope and the methodology for carrying out the works as proposed.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

- 4.1 **Delay instructing the contract:** This would delay overall Whitefield Centre completion date by two months as Cabinet approval cannot be sourced in the August cycle. This would prevent the school from receiving the additional intake of pupils in and they would have to be housed in alternative provision outside the Borough of Bury.

This would also push the works into the winter months, potentially extending the duration on site and associated costs of construction.

- 4.2 **Seek an alternative solution for the contract:** The Council have considered alternative options to deliver the additional accommodation within the timescales provided. This included use of other Council owned property, and the use of modular accommodation on the existing site, partial refiguration only. No other Council owned property could meet the needs of the school within the available timescale. Partial reconfiguration would not provide the classroom accommodation the school requires and there was insufficient space within the school to site modular accommodation or extend. A split site was also discounted as the school would not have the staffing and safeguarding arrangement available to accommodate this. None of alternative options explored were able to deliver the additional accommodation with the available timescales.

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### **Background**

- 5.1 In December 2023 cabinet approved the relocation of Spring Lane School to the New Kershaw Centre (NKC). This was to enable the construction of the new secondary school to proceed, to be sited on land off Spring Lane, Radcliffe.
- 5.2 The relocation of Spring Lane School to New Kershaw Centre (phase 1) was required before the 1st March 2024 in order to provide DfE with vacant possession of the site. This date was achieved with the PRU relocating at the end of February 2024.
- 5.3 Alongside this, one of the PRU's other buildings, Milltown House has had to be taken out of use because of its condition. The loss of the PRU, and limitations to the scope of accommodation available at the New Kershaw Centre has resulted in a shortfall of accommodation available to the PRU, particularly in respect of the delivery of vocational subjects.
- 5.4 The local authority has worked with the leadership team of Spring Lane school, and the Oak Leaning Partnership which is the proposed sponsor of Spring Lane School, to determine the immediate requirements for accommodation, but also to develop a longer-term estate strategy recognising the changing demands on provision, and the existing fragmented nature of the PRU estate, operating out of four buildings.

### **Options Appraisal**

- 5.5 As part of the long-term strategic approach, there is an urgent requirement to carry an Options Appraisal of the long-term accommodation needs of the existing PRU. The Options Appraisal will evaluate of a number chosen options to establish the most appropriate option.

- 5.6 Each option to be evaluated against set parameters to be agreed, e.g. affordability, programme, viability, and alignment with the long-term strategic approach. The option appraisal will include an assessment of each of the suitable identified sites, accommodation requirements, design (massing and areas), affordability and delivery programme.
- 5.7 The Options Appraisal will focus on four main options for further assessment during the options appraisal, these are detailed as follows:
1. **Construction of a new purpose built PRU** - Identification of a suitable council owned vacant site and construction of a new purpose built PRU, which will accommodate the full proposed intake of pupils across the borough currently 140 pupils. The existing sites, Whitefield Centre, New Kershaw Centre, Park House, and Milltown House are then proposed to be sold off to contribute towards the capital outlay.
  2. **Redevelop an existing council owned building** - Identification and redevelopment of a suitable existing council owned building (ideally an old school building), which can accommodate the full proposed intake of pupils across the borough currently 140. The existing sites, Whitefield Centre, New Kershaw Centre, Park House, and Milltown House are proposed to be sold off to contribute towards the capital outlay.
  3. **Undertake additional redevelopment/ Upgrade of the existing accommodation** - Following the relocation of the PRU from the Spring Lane Site to the New Kershaw Centre, Park House, and The Whitefield Centre (Phase 1), additional works are proposed to be undertaken to the New Kershaw Centre, Park House, and The Whitefield Centre, to further improve the existing facilities and expand the existing accommodation to enable an additional intake of pupils.
  4. **Do Nothing/ Status Quo** – Following the relocation of the PRU from the Spring Lane Site to the New Kershaw Centre, Park House, and The Whitefield Centre (Phase 1), no further are to be carried out and the buildings remaining as per the phase 1 refurbishment.

## **Phase 2 Works**

- 5.8 Phase 2 is now required, to further expand/ enhance the current provision at the New Kershaw Centre and the Whitefield Centre following the relocation from Spring Lane.
- 5.9 Phase 2 is necessary, as facilities that were available in the Spring Lane building cannot be replicated in any of the schools four buildings.
- 5.10 The Phase 2 works which are the subject of this report are for the provision of additional vocational teaching spaces. Initially, the focus was on the possible internal reconfiguration of the PRU's existing building in Whitefield. However, time constraints, requiring the accommodation to be available from the autumn term, resulted in other options also being considered.

*Note: The budget is based on an approximate internal floor area of 700m<sup>2</sup> for the whole school.*

Options		Feedback
1	<p>Full refurbishment of the school as per the requested design from the school</p> <p>Remodelling of the existing teaching space and converting the sports hall to classrooms - as per the plans received from PRU</p> <p><b>(OPTION NOT PURSUED)</b></p>	<p>Involves altering most of the school in some capacity. Would have to be carried out whilst the school is live. Unlikely we can finish before April 2025, particularly as we will be working whilst the school is live, and work will take longer and be more expensive. Will also require a lot of design and planning time.</p>
2	<p>Partial refurbishment part of the school (Sports Hall Only)</p> <p><b>(OPTION NOT PURSUED)</b></p>	<p>Unlikely that we will get the school to prioritise areas over others. This is unlikely to work as this won't cover everything the school need. Will likely require a lot of planning and design to get right.</p>
3	<p>Full refurbishment of the school with a revised design</p> <p>Remodelling the sports hall to accommodate additional classrooms, with minor reconfiguration of the existing space to meet the accommodation schedule</p> <p><b>(OPTION NOT PURSUED)</b></p>	<p>An alternative design could reap benefits by arranging the spaces more efficiently to minimise the number of areas that are refurbished. The M&amp;E is in good condition and the fabric is ok, so there could be savings. Will require sufficient design time up front to get right and satisfy the school's needs. Unlikely this can be finished before February 2025.</p>
4	<p>Installation of modular classrooms on the Whitefield site to provide extra space (3 classrooms)</p> <p><b>(OPTION NOT PURSUED)</b></p>	<p>Could work, but unsure what classrooms would be catered for, would still need the main school to be refurbed to some degree, which we don't have time.</p>
5	<p>Relocate the school to an alternative council owned building</p> <p><b>(OPTION NOT PURSUED)</b></p>	<p>We don't believe there is another site they can move to, plus time and cost would be too restrictive. Would need similar scope and cost as NKC (Phase 1)</p>
6	<p>Relocate the whole school to another site, into modular accommodation.</p>	<p>This is the only viable option, Whittaker Street has been identified as a good option, as this is available from 4<sup>th</sup></p>

		August. If we move quick, we could just about get something in for the end of 2024, but needs some design input up front.
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- 5.11 The provision of temporary modular accommodation for the whole school positioned at Whittaker Street, Radcliffe (**Option 6**) was found to be the only option that could deliver the accommodation that the school require within the timescales we have available.
- 5.12 The relocation of the Pupil Referral Unit is not subject to any statutory change as would be required by School Organisation Regulations, and as such does not require formal consultation in respect of its change of location. However, it is proposed that informal consultation take place with key stakeholders including pupils and their families.

## Existing and Proposed Site

### Existing Site - Whitefield Centre, Albert Road, Whitefield

- 5.13 The existing site is a single storey, 1970's style prefabricated primary school building with, with flat roof, fully glazed/ panelled façade, attached sport hall and car parking. This building was converted in the past into a pupil referral unit, which currently accommodates approximately 42 pupils. The building fabric and services are in reasonable condition for its age, although internal arrangement is not currently fit for purpose and requires substantial reconfiguration to improve facilities for the pupils and staff.
- 5.14 There is currently very little space within the site boundary to further extend building or has space to site temporary modular accommodation, whilst any reconfiguration works was to be undertaken. Therefore, any works would substantially disrupt the school.

### Proposed Site – vacant Bury Council Site, Whittaker Street, Radcliffe

- 5.15 The proposed site is on the land which has an old red brick, three storey, vacant council building/ old school, with large car park/ playground, which temporary modular accommodation could be sited for the Whitefield Centre, without affecting the running of the school whilst this installation is undertaken.
- 5.16 The Whittaker Street building is due to be demolished in August 2024 and the land is included in the accelerated land disposal programme.

## Programme

- 5.17 We have developed a detailed programme of works, which can be found in the Appendix of Part B of this paper. It is our intention to tender the works as soon as possible via a pre-procured framework and place an order for Manufacture soon after. Due to the nature of the PRU, the modular units will need to have a specific design and made to order. The manufacturer period is likely to take anywhere between 12-16 weeks, dependant of the availability with their factory.

## **Procurement Process**

- 5.19 Technical capacity in the form of a Project Manager (Walker Sime) were commissioned by Business, Growth and Investment (BGI) via the pre-procured Constellia Framework, to support the delivery of the Children's Services capital programme. Walker Sime were able to assist Children's service in the delivery of phase 1 and bring experience of the existing sites, the school leadership team and Bury Council processes, and have worked closely with Bury Council team in various roles since February 2023.
- 5.20 Architectural, Mechanical and Electrical, and Structural Engineer resources were commissioned through formal request for quotations using approval suppliers, aligned with the Council's Contract Rules and Procedures.
- 5.21 The construction works will be procured via the pre-procured Espo Framework, specifically for modular building providers and will be aligned with the Council's Contract Rule and Procedures.
- 5.22 The project will be overseen by BGI officers and will report to the Council's Regeneration Board for project assurance/oversight.
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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

The proposal will support key ambitions of the Let's do it strategy:

- A better future for the children of the borough
  - A better quality of life
  - A chance to feel more part of the borough
  - Building a fairer society that leaves no-one behind
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### **Equality Impact and Considerations:**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, with no negative impacts identified therefore no mitigating actions are required.

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### **Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

Environmental impacts and concerns will be considered as part of the pre-construction services and will be in-line with existing Council policies.

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## Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Significant risks in ensuring the decant of existing services from the Whitefield Centre within a short timescale.	Appointment of Project Manager
Significant risks in delivering the required accommodation and designs for the Whitefield Centre to provide improved/ increased accommodation for the school by November 2024.	Establishment of project team to help develop a project plan and design.
Financial risk in relation to affordability of the project prior to obtaining competitive price.	Undertake informal benchmarking exercise of pricing to inform the project budget.
Risk on not achieving the relocation of Whitefield Centre by 29th November 2024.	Project and risk plan prepared by project manager

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## Legal Implications:

The procurement process for the modular buildings will be undertaken via a pre-secured ESPO framework which is fully compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Contractors accepted onto the framework have already been subject to quality and price competition. The use of this framework will determine the form of call-off contract which the Council will enter into with the successful contractor.

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## Financial Implications

There is provision for these works within the Capital programme approved by Council in February 2024. These works can be treated as capital works under IFRS 16.

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## Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

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## Background papers:

Cabinet Report – 13 December 2023 – [Cabinet report - relocation of Spring Lane School to New Kershaw Centre.docx](#)

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
NKC	New Kershaw Centre – Pupil Referral Unit, Deal Street, Bury
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit - type of school that caters for children who aren't able to attend a mainstream school. Pupils are often referred there if they need greater care and support than their school can provide.
Initial Designs	High level design produced in concept form that required further development and agreement.
ESPO Framework	Procurement mechanism to use tender works to a list of contractors who have already been reviewed and pre-qualified in terms of capability and experience. Allows the tender process to be quicker.
Options Appraisal	Evaluation of a number chosen options to establish the most appropriate option to proceed with. Each option to be evaluated against set parameters to be agreed, e.g. affordability, programme, viability and alignment with the long term strategic approach.
Market Testing/ Tender	An approach to seek multiple prices from suppliers/ contractors to undertake works, for comparison, appraisal and ensure best value for money.
Reconfiguration Works	The approach of making structural and fabric alterations to a particular space to change its size, use or orientation.
Benchmarking Exercise	An informal approach to multiple (2-3) potential suppliers/ contractors to obtain intelligence on costs, to compare and help inform the correct budget amount, prior to going to tender (market testing).