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| **Briefing Note to Wyke Area Committee** 16 December 2015  |

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| **Subject: Disposal of Newland Buildings & proposed temporary relocations**  |

**Briefing Note of the City Property and Assets Manager**

1. Purpose of the Briefing Note and Summary
	1. This briefing paper is in response to a request from Wyke members for an update on the disposal of Newland Buildings and the proposed temporary use of space within Chanterlands Avenue library to accommodate the Area team and to host area committee meetings.
	2. Previous reports were submitted in May 2015 (minute 101 refers) and July 2015 (minute 9 refers). In addition individual members were contacted by email on 25 August with details of the bids received from prospective purchasers of Newland Buildings.
2. The Disposal
	1. In accordance with Cabinet’s decision to sell Newland Buildings as surplus to operational needs and to raise a capital receipt, the property was openly marketed during the summer of 2015. Two detailed bids were received which in the interests of expediency were reported to individual Area members by email dated 25 August 2015. Members’ views were requested and the majority supported the scheme which offered the lower of the 2 financial bids but which proposed to retain most of the existing buildings. The capital receipt is, however, still significant being in excess of £425,000.
	2. Subsequently the Council’s property agents, NPS Humber, have negotiated detailed terms for the disposal which have been approved by the City Manager Property & Assets. It is now in both parties’ interests to achieve an early exchange of contracts. Once exchanged the completion of the disposal is conditional upon the purchaser obtaining a satisfactory planning consent for the scheme for which an early application will be made. This scheme is to first convert the frontage buildings (where the greatest value lies) into ground floor retail units and upper floor apartments. The rear buildings will then be converted to apartments.
	3. The earliest exchange of contracts will help the Council to achieve revenue savings through the transfer of liability for holding costs (repairs and security etc) onto the purchaser. The purchaser has committed resources and understandably wishes to progress with the scheme quickly. This requires early vacant possession in order to facilitate surveys and then to implement the works to the frontage buildings. The purchaser has agreed to delay vacant possession until February 2016 to allow time for the Council to complete the necessary arrangements for the relocation of its staff and activities.
	4. The purchaser has expressed a willingness to explore the practicability of allowing temporary continued use of the rear buildings as a youth club (3 nights per week) by the Youth Service. Also to allow continued use of the Mugga pitch in the short-term. A request by a community theatre group to also have temporary space is to be evaluated by the purchaser.

1. Relocations and Issues for Consideration
	1. Currently the Council uses Newland Buildings as an operational base for the Wyke Area team (c14 staff) and for Area Committee meetings. The Youth Service also have staff based at Newland Buildings.
	2. The Youth Service has confirmed that it will relocate the staff into other of its existing locations. However, it has not identified an alternative location for the youth club which currently meets 3 times a week in the rear of Newland Buildings. The purchaser has agreed to assess whether it is practicable for these activities to temporarily remain in occupation (the primary concern being the heating and power supplies and health & safety considerations). An answer is expected shortly and it is hoped that the youth club can remain for at least 6 months.
	3. Options for the future structure and location of the Council’s Area teams

 are understood to be under consideration by the Directorate and its

 portfolioholder. There is also member and officer consideration actively

 being given to the former Park Avenue Adult Education Centre and how this

 might best be used as a retained operational asset. Both of these may be

 determining factors as regards the future options for the location of the Wyke

 Area team and associated committee meetings and activities.

3.4 The disposal of Newland Buildings requires an immediate and deliverable

relocation solution to be found . There is the opportunity to satisfy this, at least as a temporary measure, in underutilised space at Chanterlands Avenue

 library premises. Other possibilities include using underutilised space at

 Orchard Centre and/or at Calvert Centre for staff, and finding temporary meeting space facilities for the Area Committee. This is not to preclude Park Avenue or other options which may be identified over the coming weeks but at the present it is not known if these will be deliverable within the timescale for vacating Newland Buildings .The various options will be explored in close liaison with the Area Director.

3.5 As regards the Chanterlands Avenue library premises it is acknowledged that

 these have limitations, but they have capacity in terms of office and meeting

 space with only modest expenditure required. The use of the library space has been discussed with the library service who are amenable subject to the

 details being agreed. There is scope to create sufficient workstations on the

 first floor with meeting space and kitchen and sanitary facilities. An indicative

 floor layout is attached. A fully costed proposal is in preparation and the budget estimate is currently c £20k. The library operates limited hours and the ground floor children’s library area can become multi functional to allow its use at times for large meetings such as committee meetings .This would be facilitated through the provision of folding tables and stackable chairs. The first floor is not accessible by wheelchair users. The provision of a chair lift would cost in the region of £15k and for a temporary relocation option it is not proposed that this be included, although should a longer term be anticipated then one could be installed at a later date. It may be possible for wheelchair and disabled visitor to have an interface with Area staff using the ground floor library area or for home visits to be arranged. Newland Building does not have wheelchair access to upper floor areas.

3.6 Other temporary options are being explored including Calvert Centre and

Orchard Centre. It is not yet known if Park Avenue has any space which can be brought into use within the necessary timeframe but if so then this would be

 another option .

4. Conclusions and Next Steps

4.1 The various temporary relocation options are being fully explored and will be

further discussed with the Area Director. The proposal for the Youth Service to temporarily continue the youth club activities at Newland Buildings will be

 actively progressed with the purchaser. The temporary and the more permanent use of the former Park Avenue Adult Education Centre are both being explored. The latter will be the subject of a report in January to the portfolioholder and will include details and indicative costs of building works necessary for its retention as an operational asset.

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Background Documents: Minute 101 and minute 9 of Area Committee meetings held 20 May 2015 and 15 July 2015

