

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	20 July 2016
Title:	Family Support Service – Children’s Centre Buildings Strategy
Reference:	7560
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek authority to enable the implementation of the asset and property work in support of, and as a consequence to, the consultation on the future provision of Children’s Services Family Support Service and in particular services provided from Children’s Centres.

1.2. This report seeks;

- To set out the context to the Family Support Services strategy and the concurrent approval being sought from the Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services
- Approval to the principles of the approach to be taken, which is set out in more detail in the report
- Approval to the alternative uses identified for the Children’s Centre buildings with detailed proposals for individual properties being approved on the Schedule of Routine Transactions on a case by case basis subsequent to this report.

2. Contextual Information

2.1. Children’s Centres have operated in Hampshire since 2004, and work with families and children aged 0–4 years to help support a child’s development and readiness for school. The centres also provide advice on parenting, healthy lifestyles, employment and training. While these centres also work with families and children with complex needs, the services provided are currently available to all families with children aged 0–4 years.

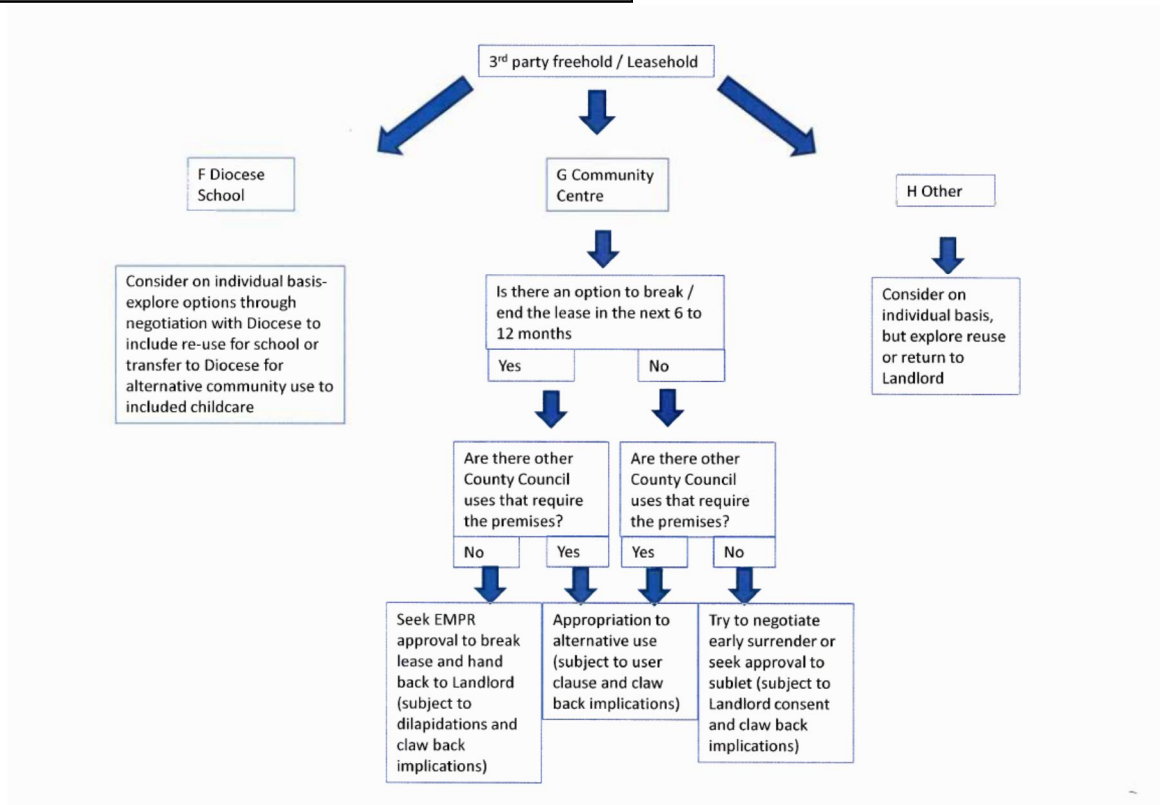
- 2.2. There are currently 54 children's centres in Hampshire, arranged in 15 clusters. The centres are all managed by voluntary sector contractors, with the exception of three individual centres which are managed by maintained nursery schools. The contracts for the centres end in March 2017. Services are delivered in partnership with other services, including Health and voluntary organisations, from 75 buildings across the county, and at a range of community venues. Over 2,000 families access these services at any one time. Children's centres currently offer help to families at all levels of need.
- 2.3. Children's Services have consulted on the development of a new Family Support Service (FSS) which proposes the creation of a single service for families and children aged 0-19 years. This new offer would bring together the work of children's centres, Early Help hubs, Youth Support Services and align with the Supporting Troubled Families Programme.
- 2.4. The current Children's Centre buildings range from stand alone modular structures, conversions of existing buildings, extensions to school buildings, accommodation in libraries and accommodation in community centres. Some are owned by Hampshire County Council as freehold, others are leased from third parties, some from community associations or other local authorities.
- 2.5. The proposal is that one FSS Hub is provided in each District/Borough and for the buildings which are to close to be made available for alternative uses or to be declared surplus to Children's Services requirements.
- 2.6. Property Services were involved in the original design and construction of Sure Start Children's Centres. The works were mostly funded by Government Grant (General Sure Start Grant) or through the Children's Services capital programme.
- 2.7. Children's Services has consulted on the proposed development of a new Family Support Service, this public consultation took place between 23 February 2016 and 3 May 2016. The consultation was widely publicised including in the April 2016 newsletter to Town and Parish Councils. The outcomes of this consultation, with recommendations will be reported to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on 1 July 2016.

3. Principles of the asset and property approach

- 3.1. The flow charts below (figure 1 and figure 2) set out the designation of each category of property and the strategy for each designation is detailed below:
- 3.2. Leasehold/ 3rd Party Properties
 - 3.2.1 Buildings held under lease from a community association or local authority to be offered to other service departments for their use subject to landlord's consent where required.
 - 3.2.2 If not required and therefore declared surplus to Hampshire County Council requirements, Notices to Break the lease to be served and the buildings handed back to the Landlord but with a request that they are ideally used for wider community use including where required and appropriate for childcare or FSS out-reach opportunities.

3.2.3 Buildings on Church of England (Controlled) school land will be transferred to the school for their use or transferred to the school trustees for alternative community use to include childcare where there is a requirement.

Figure 1 Leasehold/ 3rd Party Properties



3.3 Freehold Properties

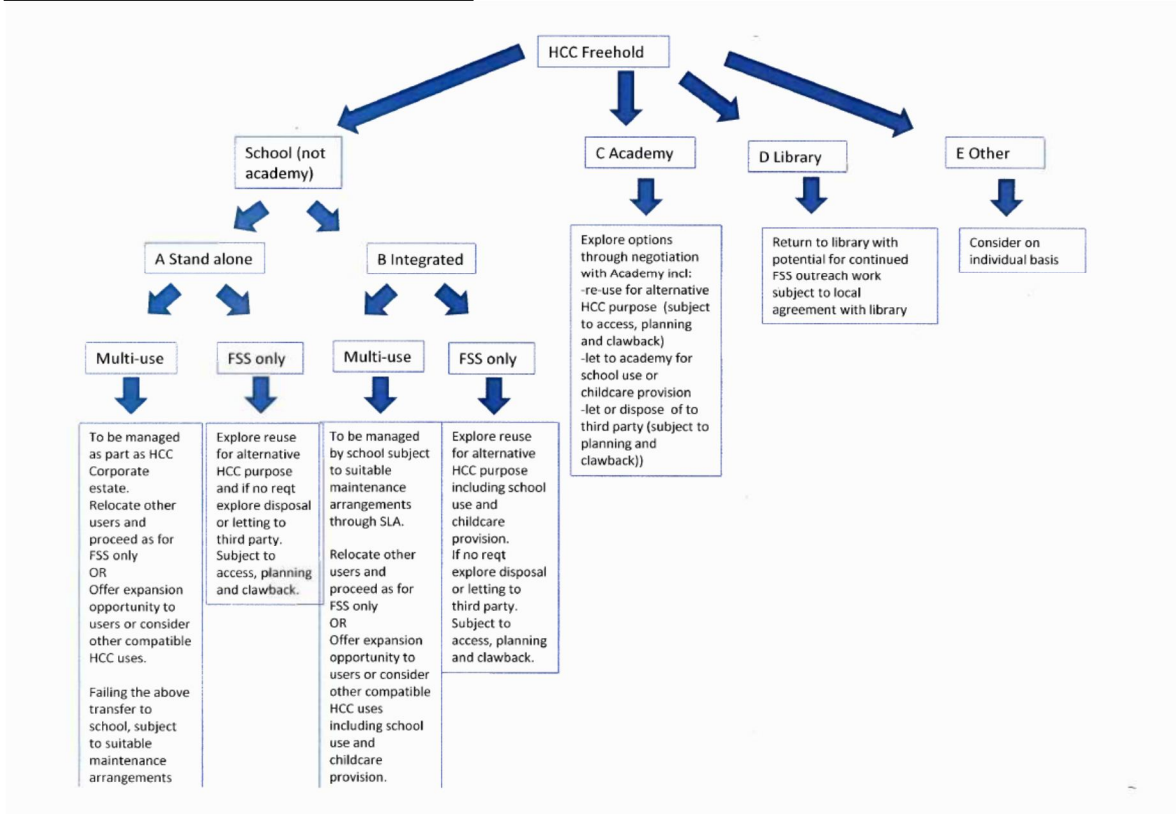
3.3.1 Buildings integral or attached to schools, to be passed to the management of the school and used for activities such as:

- Provision of additional school places;
- Early years provision, either through expansion of existing childcare provision on site, new childcare provision or schools lowering their age range;
- Wider school related functions;
- Other community uses.

3.3.2 Stand alone buildings on school sites that are not returned to the school to be retained under the management of the corporate estate. However wherever possible ongoing repair and maintenance liability to be passed to the tenant. In relation to alternative uses, these could be early years provision or other appropriate community activities. An Early Years sufficiency assessment has been undertaken by Children’s Services and a number of freehold buildings have been identified in the attached Appendix 1, as being required and suitable for childcare use.

- 3.3.3 Accommodation in libraries, to be handed back to the Library Service for library provision or alternative third party use. Family Support outreach services to continue where a local agreement can be reached with the individual library. The Library Service has confirmed they are prepared to take back the accommodation in its existing condition.
- 3.3.4 Buildings on Academy sites are excluded from Academy leases but where the Children’s Centres are declared surplus to Hampshire County Council’s requirements it is proposed to grant the Academies a lease of the accommodation. This will also be subject to the Academies receiving approval by the Department for Education to a revised Funding Agreement.
- 3.3.5 Buildings and land that are declared surplus to Hampshire County Council requirements that do not fall into the categories above to be considered for disposal either to another public sector body or on the open market. The County Council would consider any appropriate Community Right to Bid offers which would be dealt with under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.3.6 In the event that disposal is for an alternative use e.g. residential development, consideration will be given to the possibility of re-using the buildings for other County Council uses before disposal.
- 3.3.7 The potential strategy for each property is to be based on their designated category, details of which are contained in Appendix 1, attached.

Figure 2 Freehold Properties



4. Finance

- 4.1. Where accommodation is transferred to a school, it will become part of their delegated responsibility in the same way as their existing buildings. If the school buys into Property Services repair and maintenance service level agreement (SLA) the additional floor area will be included as part of the schools accommodation, which will increase their SLA charge.
- 4.2. Where a building is standalone and not used by the school, it is proposed that ongoing repair and maintenance costs be passed to any future tenant.
- 4.3. Ongoing running costs of the buildings to be retained as Family Support Service Hubs will be funded by Children's Services.
- 4.4. Subject to the outcome of the consultation and Executive Lead Member for Children's Services decision, it is likely there will be void and holding costs associated with the buildings to be released. This cost is to be funded by Children's Services until an alternative use is achieved and forms part of the business case being presented to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.
- 4.5. Children's Services will also be responsible for any one off costs in relation to minor alterations or dilapidations. It is proposed that any alterations required by a tenant to facilitate an alternative use will be funded by the tenant in return for a rent free period.
- 4.6. The Department for Education (DfE) have the option to invoke clawback in relation to General Sure Start Grant which Hampshire County Council will be liable to pay if required by the DfE. However, it is anticipated that the intended strategy around future use of non retained buildings will avoid this issue as far as possible.

5. Other key issues

- 5.1. Services from Children's Centres are delivered in partnership with other service providers, including Health. Discussions are taking place with these providers to enable them to understand the implications of the proposed changes and to find alternative accommodation for their own services where required. Where a local agreement can be reached some services may still be able to operate from the same or nearby site but this is subject to local agreement and arrangements.

6. Future direction

- 6.1. Subject to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services decision on the FSS on 1 July 2016, the principles of the Property Strategy set out in section 3 above will be implemented in relation to buildings identified to be released. In relation to any lettings or disposals, these will be brought back to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources on the Schedule of Routine Transactions or dealt with by Officer Delegations as appropriate.

7. Recommendations

- a) That the proposed Property Strategy in relation to Children's Centre buildings as set out in the report above be approved.
- b) That the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (Strategic Manager - Assets and Development) be authorised to settle detailed terms and conditions in relation to the proposed lettings to third parties to be reported on the Schedule of Routine Transactions or dealt with by Officer delegations as appropriate.
- c) In relation to any sites or buildings suited to alternative use, that the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (Strategic Manager- Assets and Development) be authorised to submit planning applications in respect of the surplus sites and including entering into any agreements necessary for the securing of planning consents, such as agreements under Section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, in connection with securing the best price for the disposal of these properties.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Family Support Service	7497	1 July 2016
Transformation to 2017 – Revenue Savings Proposals	6889	16 September 2015
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been fully considered by Children's Services in their Family Support Service report to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on 1 July 2016. It is considered that the Children's Centre buildings strategy has no additional impact and any reuse will fully consider the impact on equalities.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. The proposed Family Support Service Hubs will enable the delivery of this service which will have a positive impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Overall proposals involve a reduction in space occupied by the County Council and therefore there will be a positive impact on our carbon footprint/ energy consumption.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

There is considered to be no impact in terms of climate change.

Appendix 1 – Potential Strategy for Children’s Centre Properties

District	Children’s Centre	Likely designation (flow chart Figure 1&2)	Type of Location	Tenure	Proposed alternative use subject to ELMCS decision 1 July 2016
Basingstoke	Honeycomb		Primary School	Freehold	Retained
	Pebbles	A	Former school site	Freehold	Childcare use
	Buttercups	B	Infant School	Freehold	Childcare Use
	Octopus	G	Community Centre	Leasehold- Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC)	Childcare use in discussion with BDBC
	Badgers	G	Community Centre	Leasehold- BDBC	Return to BDBC
	Hometree	G	Community Centre	Leasehold- BDBC	Return to BDBC
	Westside	G	Community Centre	Leasehold- BDBC	Childcare use in discussion with BDBC
	Bunnies	G	Community Centre	Leasehold- BDBC	Childcare use in discussion with BDBC
	Lily pads	D	Library	Freehold	Return to Library
	Courtyard	E	Adjacent to community centre	Freehold	Return to Corporate Estate
	Snowdrops	G	Community Centre/Library	Leasehold- Overton Community Association	Return to Community Centre
East Hants	Bushy Leaze		Junior School	Freehold	Retained
	Heath-TreeTops-Hillside	E	Stand alone	Freehold	Potential site for alternative HCC use or disposal and use of modular building for school expansion scheme
	Chase	B	Infant and Junior School	Freehold	Return to school, could support potential expansion
Eastleigh	Aviary		Primary School	Freehold	Retained
	The Nest	A	Academy Secondary School	Freehold	Lease to school
	Little Coppice	A	Infant and Junior School	Freehold	Return to school
	West End Gateway	G	Community Centre/Hall	Leasehold- West End Town Council	Return to WETC but discuss potential use for pre-school
	Caterpillar Hill	D	Library	Freehold	Return to Library
	Chamberlayne	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to school
	Windmill	A	Infant School	Freehold	Return to schools, could support potential expansion
	Hop a Long	F	Primary School	Vested in school trustees	Return to school
Fareham	Oak Meadow		Academy Infant School	Freehold	Retained
	Merryfields	C	Secondary Academy School	Freehold	Lease to school for childcare use
	Keepsake	G	Community Centre/Hall	Leasehold- Fareham Borough Council (FBC)	Consider alternative HCC uses or return to FBC
	Sovereign	A	Secondary School	Freehold	Return to school
Gosport	Rowner		Community Centre/Hall	Licence	Retained
	Little Waves	H	Sixth form college	Leasehold	Childcare use in discussion with college
	Haven	B	Nursery School	Freehold	Return to maintained nursery school
	Haselbridge	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to School
	Stubblee Hill	B	Infant School	Freehold	Return to School
	Tree House	A	Infant School	Freehold	Return to school
Hart	Turners Wood		Primary School	Freehold	Retained
	Water Lilies	A	Infant School	Freehold	Return to school for childcare use
	Wisteria	D	Library	Freehold	Return to Library
	Fleet Fireflies	D	Library	Freehold	Return to Library
	Woodlark	B	Secondary School	Freehold	Return to School
	Little Saplings	B	Infant School	Freehold	Return to School
	Wild Rose	A	Junior School	Freehold	Return to School

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District	Children’s Centre	Likely designation (flow chart Figure 1&2)	Type of Location	Tenure	Proposed alternative use subject to ELMCS decision 1 July 2016
Havant	Sharps Copse		Primary School	Freehold	Retained
	Trospacc	B	Infant and Junior School	Freehold	Return to school, could support potential expansion
	Links	E	Stand alone	Freehold	Subject to existing HCC office use and Early Years use. Possible additional childcare use
	Mill Hill	A	Primary School	Freehold	Subject to existing HCC office use and Early Years use. Possible additional childcare use
	Crookhorn Lane	A	Primary School	Freehold	Return to school
	Star fish	B	Junior School	Freehold	Return to school
	Park Futures	H	Stand alone (next to Warren Park School)	Licence (Park Futures)	Back to Park Futures for Early Years and community services
	The Orchard	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to School
	Branches	A	Secondary School	Freehold	Return to school
New Forest	Cadland		Primary School	Freehold	Retained
	Waterside	A	Primary School	Freehold	Return to school
	All Seasons / Seedlings	A	Infant School	Freehold	Return to school for childcare use
	Forest First	G	Community Centre	Leasehold (New Forest District Council NFDC)	Return to NFDC
	The Patch	G	Community Centre/Hall	Leasehold (NFDC)	Return to NFDC
	Phoenix	E	Youth Centre	Freehold	Proposed Free School
	The Harbour	B	Infant School	Freehold	Return to School
	Pathways	D	Library	Freehold	Return to Library
	Bridges	A	Junior School	Freehold	Return to School
Rushmoor	Park		Primary School	Freehold	Retained
	Owls	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to school for childcare use
	Maple Vue	A	Infant School	Freehold	Return to school
	Butterflies	B	Infant School	Freehold	Return to School
	Sycamore	B	Junior School	Freehold	Return to School
Test Valley	Spring Meadow		Stand alone (on site nursery)	Freehold	Retained
	Poppies	F	Primary School	Vested in school trustees	Return to school for childcare use (subject to Diocese agreement)
	Acorns	B	Special school	Freehold	Return to School
	Little Oaks	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to schools , could support potential expansion
	Watermeadow	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to School
Winchester	Merry go Round		Primary School	Vested in school trustees	Retained
	Reign & Shine	B	Primary School	Freehold	Return to school
	Sparklers	G	Community Centre	Leasehold (Winnall Community Association)	Return to Community Association
	The Carroll	G	Community Centre/Hall	Licence (The Carroll Centre)	Return to The Carroll Centre
	Little Petals	D	Library	Freehold	Return to Library
	Lanterns	B	Nursery School	Freehold	Return to maintained nursery school
	Sunbeams	A	Junior School	Freehold	Return to School
	Happy Valley	B	Infant School	Freehold	Return to School