

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET –23 APRIL 2009

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**PROPOSED CENTRE FOR WALLASEY YOUTH PROJECT AT THE FIRE STATION,  
MILL LANE, WALLASEY – SCHEME & ESTIMATE REPORT**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report outlines the proposal to accommodate a Youth Club within the ground floor of the Wallasey Fire Station and re-locate Fire & Rescue facilities from the ground floor into under-used accommodation on the first floor. The report requests Members' approval of the scheme and estimate, together with authorisation to complete the design and obtain tenders.

**1. Background**

At the Cabinet meeting on 06 November 2008 proposed 2009/10 budget savings from the Children and Young People's Department were presented. A request was made by Cabinet for a follow-up report detailing a proposed reconfiguration setting out the impact of these changes on the operation of the Youth Service.

- 1.1 A report proposing the consolidation of Youth Service provision into four districts, each with a major centre and smaller satellites, was approved by Cabinet on 27 November 2008 (minute 283 refers). That report sought permission to engage with the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service to consider a centre to be created at Wallasey Fire Station using Youth Capital Plus funding. Members were informed that the proposals over the four districts would result in a reduction in the youth service budget of £150,000 out of a total budget of £2,650,900.
- 1.2 The vision for Wirral is to have four large, modern facilities which offer young people a broad menu, providing support, information and access to developmental opportunities. Wallasey Fire Station has been chosen as the preferred location for one of the four main centres.
- 1.3 Since that Cabinet meeting consultation has been held with young people regarding the programme of activities to be offered at each of the main centres, and several meetings have been held with representatives of the Fire & Rescue Service.
- 1.4 An expression of interest in 'My Place' was submitted by Merseyside Fire and Rescue in respect of Wallasey Fire Station. Although the fire station submission was not successful, its location near to a number of anti-social behaviour hot spots and the absence of youth provision in the area meant that it could be considered for development under Youth Capital Plus.
- 1.5 The proposal has a number of linkages to the national Aiming High Strategy. The involvement of a range of partners will ensure that young people are being offered a broad menu. In addition the proposal is based on provision being attractive and

available at week-ends. The Fire and Rescue brand is universally recognised and is associated with high quality service provision.

- 1.6 The fire station is in a good location for young people and is close to public transport links. As a working fire station, fire and rescue officers will be on site 24 hrs which provides an added sense of security.

## **2. Proposals**

- 2.1 Wallasey Fire Station was purpose-built in 1974 by Wallasey Corporation as a headquarters for the Fire Brigade. As such, it has accommodation which is now underused as an area fire station. Upon Local Government Re-organisation later that year it transferred to what is now known as the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. The building comprises 3 floors of accommodation and is of steel-framed construction with concrete floors and brick-faced cavity wall construction. The building has generally been well maintained, and is in a good state of repair. Vehicular access is good, and existing parking provision is adequate.
- 2.2 The site includes a Healthy-Living Centre which is used by people who are recovering from heart related illness. This facility is in a detached building at the rear of the Fire Station has recently been developed in conjunction with the PCT.
- 2.3 It is proposed that accommodation is made available to the Wirral CYPD Youth Service on a 10 year lease at a pepper corn rent. The heating, electrical supply and landlord maintenance costs of the external fabric of the building will be met by the Fire Authority and included in the lease arrangements. Delegated authority to proceed with a lease on these terms is being sought separately from the Cabinet portfolio holder by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management.
- 2.4 The proposal involves the Fire & Rescue Service vacating approx. 400 sq.m. of accommodation, principally comprising 3 large dormitories, a large locker room, toilet facilities, laundry, drying room, fitness room, and 2 offices. In addition, approx. 100 sq.m. of detached garage space is to be vacated.
- 2.5 By way of redress, the proposals include the development of nine single study/ rest rooms for the Fire & Rescue Service on the first floor, together with three single WC/ shower compartments. Each study/ rest room shall contain five lockers, a bed, desk and chair, all supplied separately from these proposals by the Fire & Rescue Service. Recreational facilities shall be re-located in the existing meeting room at first floor level, and the laundry and drying facilities shall be re-located in the existing auxilliary control room at ground floor level.
- 2.6 The proposed Youth Project accommodation shall cater for up to 80 service users per session, and shall include:
- A dance studio / performance space,
  - A fitness and games room,
  - 2 general purpose Activity Rooms, including Art facilities,
  - An I.T.Training Suite,
  - A sound-proof Music Room,
  - A Training Kitchen / Snack and Juice Bar,
  - An open and welcoming Lounge / Reception area,
  - A Chill-out Room,
  - 2 Offices, including Reception facilities,

- Locker Room and Toilets,
- A large Outdoor Equipment Store / Drying Area, and
- Dry Equipment Store.

- 2.7 The proposed Youth Project accommodation shall be physically segregated from the operational Fire Station, and shall be provided with its own independent entrance, with canopy, and emergency exit points. New windows shall be installed in the former shower and locker room areas to introduce additional natural lighting.
- 2.8 The existing accommodation does not comply with current DDA requirements for accessibility. The proposals include widening doorways and increasing corridor widths, as well as providing ramps to each external door. A wheelchair-accessible WC is also proposed.
- 2.9 The Youth Project accommodation and new study/ rest rooms for the Fire & Rescue Service shall require re-wiring, including IT data installation, to meet the Council's specification, and generally the heating installations in the areas to be developed shall require a full re-fit. The Youth Project accommodation shall be provided with its own fire and intruder alarm installations.
- 2.10 It is suggested that the remodelling of the Fire Station to accommodate the Youth Project be carried out over a 16 week contract period. The initial works would, by necessity, be the relocation of the Fire & Rescue Service accommodation, followed by the development of the Youth Project accommodation. It is anticipated that the works shall be completed by November 2009.

### 3. Financial implications

- 3.1 All Professional Services for the scheme are being provided by staff within the Technical Services Department with costs met from the grant from Youth Capital Plus allocation.
- 3.2 The estimated costs for the works are;

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|---|---------------------------|
| Building Works to relocate Fire & Rescue Service facilities                           | £ 97,400.00               |
| Building Works to accommodate Youth Project within Fire Station<br>main building      | £227,000.00               |
| Building Works to detached garage block + external works<br>relating to Youth Project | £ 19,000.00               |
| Contingencies   | £ 30,000.00               |
| <b>Total estimated building costs</b>   | <b><u>£373,400.00</u></b> |

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|---|----------------------------|
| Departmental Charges including: -<br>Professional Fees<br>Clerk Of Works Salary<br>CDM Coordinator<br>Building Regulation Fees<br>Planning Fees | £ 56,010.00                |
| <b>Total building costs including fees</b>  | <b><u>£ 429,410.00</u></b> |

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|--|---------------------------|
| Furniture & Equipment for Youth Project            | £ 22,600                  |
| <b>OVERALL ANTICIPATED SET-UP COSTS OF PROJECT</b> | <b><u>£452,000.00</u></b> |

3.3 A Project plan has been prepared and submitted to the National Youth Taskforce Team at the Department of Children Schools and Families. Funding under the Youth Capital Plus scheme would ordinarily have been available only up to April 2009, however, staff from the Youth Task Force have indicated that if the money is committed and the project plan indicates a completion date for next year the money can be carried forward.

3.4 The scheme is being funded by a Youth Capital Plus grant from the Department of Children, Schools and Families of £452,000. As reported in 2.3 the revenue costs for heating, lighting and external maintenance will be met by the Fire Authority.

#### **4. Staffing implications**

4.1 The staffing implications across the service were outlined in the report to Cabinet on 27 November 2008 (minute 283 refers).

4.2 Wallasey Fire Station Youth Project would be staffed by a full time worker and there would be an increase in part time hours to ensure the six night provision. The additional staffing required to enable six night provision in the reconfigured service will be identified by de-commissioning provision at other youth centres and redeploying staff to the commissioned centres.

#### **5. Equal opportunities implications**

5.1 Access will be provided for both service users and providers with disabilities to all areas of the Wallasey Fire Station Youth Project.

5.2 Ramped access is currently available to the ground floor of the operational Fire Station, and this shall be retained.

5.3 Whereas there is a lift to the upper floors of the Fire & Rescue Service accommodation, access to the upper floors shall generally be restricted to ambulant persons.

5.4 There are no implications in this report for equal opportunities in relation to women, ethnic minorities, or the elderly.

#### **6. Community safety implications**

6.1 The proposals allow for a co-ordinated response to community safety and enables the service to engage with the Youth Crime Action Plan.

6.2 The design of this project will take into account best practice to reduce the risk of crime and the local Crime Reduction Officer will be consulted.

#### **7. Local Agenda 21 implications**

7.1 These proposals will encourage the positive engagement of young people.

7.2 Low energy electrical fittings, heating controls and water saving devices will all be used as far as possible to help reduce the consumption of natural resources.

7.3 All timber used will be from sustainable sources as by regulated by the FSC (Forestry Stewardship Council) or equivalent.

7.4 A "Site Waste Management Plan" will be incorporated in line with recent statutory requirements.

## **8. Planning implications**

8.1 Planning permission and building regulations approval will be required for the scheme and will be submitted by the Technical Services Department, upon Members' agreement, in due course.

8.2 The current Building Regulations (Part L2B), which came into effect on 06 April 2006, require that, when carrying out an extension or major works to building services on an existing building with a total useful floor area of over 1000 sq.m., 'consequential improvements' to the energy performance of the overall building shall be required where it is technically, functionally and economically feasible. The value of these consequential improvements shall generally be deemed under Requirement 17D to be not less than 10% of the value of the principal works. New double-glazed windows and new boilers installed in recent years may be attributed to this area.

## **9. Anti-poverty implications**

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **10. Social inclusion implications**

10.1 The Youth Service seeks to address social exclusion and promote inclusion.

10.2 The scheme will provide full accessibility for service users in a safe and inclusive environment.

## **11. Local Member Support implications**

11.1 Wallasey Fire Station is in the Liscard Ward, but the proposals may be of interest to Members from all adjacent wards.

## **12. Background papers**

12.1 The information used in preparation of this report is contained within CYPD's bidding documents; the Architect's file C18545 and the Quantity Surveyor's working papers.

12.2 Aiming High – Youth Outreach A Ten Year Strategy For Young People.  
Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review – Children's Services and Lifelong Learning.

## **13. Recommendations**

That

(1) The scheme and estimate contained within this report be approved,

(2) Technical Services be authorised to obtain all necessary statutory approvals for the proposed works,

(3) The Director of Technical Services be authorised to seek tenders for the proposed works, in accordance with the Council's procurement rules, and,

(4) The Director of Children's Services use his delegated powers to accept the lowest bona fide tender, and report back to members in due course.

Howard Cooper  
Director of Children's Services