

Declare Clifton Children's Centre surplus to operational requirements – Briefing document

Clifton Children's Centre was originally constructed in 2008 adjacent to the Dovecote Primary School with funding from the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the national Sure Start initiative.

The Centre has provided Early Help services to the local community in addition to day care provision through a private charity, Greenfields Ltd.

The Early Help service was gradually relocated to Clifton Young People's Centre (CYPC) on Green Lane, where delivery has now taken place for around three years. This followed consultation with parents, who requested CYPC as a more accessible venue.

Greenfields, the day care provider, ceased delivery prior to lockdown. They were offered the option of taking on management of the whole site under a full repairing lease or purchase, but were unable to identify a financially viable option for this.

Another local day-care provider was approached and provided with the estimated annual running costs, however, they did not consider the site as a viable option.

The adjoining Dovecote School was approached to take on the centre, but declined the invitation due to a reduction in their pupil numbers.

The annual running costs for the site is approximately 55k, including an 8k Business Rates charge. The service proposes to achieve a partial saving on this in financial year 2021-2022 and then a full saving of this amount from 2022-2023 onwards.

Risks identified and considered:

- National claw-back of funds by the DfE – the original DfE contract for funding the Sure Start building programme specified a potential clawback of funds within a specified period in the event of a capital receipt. However this request for a delegated decision relates only to revenue funds.
- The site has been vacated, with services reduced to holding capacity, the cost of which will remain with the Early Help Service.