

## RECORD OF DECISION MADE BY PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Decision Ref. No:**

**Responsible Officer:** Kay Errington, Strategy Lead Early Years

**Subject:** Pokesdown Children's Centre, Somerset Road

### **Decision taken:**

**To approve the Council entering into a 10 year lease of the Pokesdown Children's Centre**

### **Reasons for the decision:**

To secure premises for a children's centre to serve families in Pokesdown. This contributes to the Council's Community Action priority and links to the priority outcomes for increased prevention and early intervention and safeguarding vulnerable adults and children. The Council has a statutory obligation under the Childcare Act 2006 to deliver sufficient children's centres to meet the needs of families with children under 5.

### **Call-in and Urgency:**

This decision is subject to the Council's call-in procedure.

### **Background:**

The Pokesdown Children's Centre is owned by the YMCA. In 2008 the Council used a Sure Start Capital grant of £130,000 to upgrade the facilities at the former Teddies Learning Centre and change its use to a children's centre. A condition of the grant is that it must be used by families with under 5's for a period of 25 years. The YMCA has been operating the children's centre for the past 5 years.

The Council recently tendered the children's centre services and the YMCA has been awarded the contract to operate the centre for a further two and a half years. It was identified during this process that a lease of the Pokesdown Children's Centre was required to ensure its continued use as a children's centre by the Council. Terms for a 10 year lease with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 have been provisionally agreed with the YMCA. This includes an option to renew for a further 10 years.

**Options - and reasons for rejection:**

**Deliver services by outreach arrangements** – This would involve using local community buildings for example community centres and churches. There are no community facilities in the area which would be able to accommodate a quality children’s centre provision. This option would result in the community losing a permanent local hub facility and would affect the level of service to this area. This option may also mean that the Council cannot satisfy the conditions of the grant which funded the improvement works to the building and could have to repay the grant.

**Continue to use the premises without a lease** –the Council would have no legal right to use the building and therefore the Council could lose the use of this facility in the future.

**Consultations undertaken:**

The Early Years Capital Asset Officer and Children’s Centre Operation and Quality Development Manager have been consulted and agree to the proposed lease. The Head of Property Services has confirmed that the terms of the lease are appropriate.

**Finance/Resource Implications:**

The contract value for Pokesdown has not been increased as a result of the proposed rental payment of £9,000. The rent, other outgoings and repairing obligations will be paid by the organisation awarded the contract to run the children’s centre. For the next 2½ years this will be the YMCA, at which point the contract may be extended or re-tendered. The annual rent excludes the value of the improvements funded through the Sure Start grant.

**Name**  
**Date**



**Signature: (of Chief Finance Officer)**

13/11/13

**Legal implications:**

Under the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 local authorities have a duty to secure sufficient children’s centre provision for their area. As there is currently no written agreement with the YMCA, there is a risk that the Council would not be able to guarantee the use of the premises for the delivery of children services. This agreement will secure the Council’s use of the building for the next 10 years together with an option to renew the lease for a further 10 years.

**Name**  
**Date**



**Signature: (of Monitoring Officer)**

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**Risk assessment:**

A risk assessment was completed as part of the Children’s Centre tendering process, this identified removal or reduction of the Early Intervention Grant as a high risk. The lease will include a 2 month rolling break option from September 2015. This will mitigate the risk of ongoing liabilities to the Council if the building is not needed in the

future or a lack of funding forces its closure.

**Name:** Gaye Wright                      **Signature:** (of Childrens Centre Operation and Quality Development Manager)  
**Date:**

**Impact Assessments:**

Impact assessments have been carried out as part of the Children's Centre tendering process. The Equality Impact Needs Assessment identified that without children's centre provision the gap in outcomes between children in the areas of greatest deprivation and the rest of the Borough will significantly widen.

The Environmental Impact Assessment identified that the provision of children's centres has a positive impact on the environment. Children's Centre services greatly enhance the opportunities for families, particularly those living in the poorest areas. By providing a Borough wide network of Children's Centres within walking distance or close to public transport routes the need for Centre users to travel by car is reduced.

**Information for publication:**

Yes

**Background papers:**

Cabinet Report - June 2012

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/CouncilDemocracy/Councillors/CouncillorCommitteeMeeting/Cabinet/2012/06/20/Cabinet20-Jun-2012.aspx>

Any conflict of interest declared by a Cabinet Member who is consulted by the Member taking the decision	Name of Cabinet Member	Nature of interest	Details of any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer
Yes	Councillor Crawford	Chief Executive of Bournemouth YMCA	n/a

\* Delete as appropriate

**Decision taken by:**

Councillor MOIRA ALLEN (Print name)

Cabinet Portfolio Education + Children's Services

Signed [Redacted] decision: 25th Nov '13

Date of publication: 20/12/13

**Date decision effective** - that is 5 working days after the date of publication of the record of decision unless the decision is called-in for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel: 31.12.13