Corporate, Resource Management and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Meeting: 26th January 2021

BREDBURY CIVIC HALL AGECROFT ROAD BREDBURY

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

1.0 Matter for Consideration

1.1 The disposal of the Bredbury Civic Hall Agrecroft Road Bredbury to Mosscare St Vincent's (MSV)

2.0 Background

2.1 The Bredbury Green Civic Hall is owned by the Council and is identified edged red on the attached plan. The building has remained vacant for a significant number of years due to condition issues and would require significant investment in order to put it back into a useable condition. There is currently no identified user for the building and it is therefore deemed surplus to requirements.

2.2 A report was submitted to the Werneth Area Committee in December 2015 setting out the above and advising that it was intended to dispose of the building. This report was noted by the Committee.

2.3 The site has been identified by Mosscare St Vincent's who are a North West community based landlord and member of the Stockport Housing Partnership to develop a residential facility for people with a learning disability. They have a significant stock holding in the immediate vicinity of the site.

2.4 Planning consent for the proposed scheme has not yet been granted and disposal would be dependent upon this being obtained. Scheme designs have been prepared and these plans are attached to this report. A full planning application has been submitted by MSV following extensive local consultation.

3.0 Information

3.1 Stockport MBC currently have over 450 people in supported living, the majority in shared houses with a small number having their own accommodation, or living within Shared Lives. The Community Care Act paved the way for people to have access to supported living in the community as opposed to residential care. Valuing People detailed the need for people with a learning disability to have access to opportunities to live more independently and to move on from care within the family home. These principles guide Stockport MBC's vision for people with a learning disability.

3.2 The demand for supported living continues to grow. Increasingly, families have higher expectations for their son or daughter and wish to see them settled in a supported living environment soon after reaching 18, or on completion of their education. There is a perceived need for the life chances of young people with a learning disability to match that of their (non-disabled) peers. People with a learning disability are living well, and surviving more birth and childhood challenges which demands a service response able to meet the needs of a diverse group, often with associated health needs.

3.3 A large number of the current properties have been used for supported living for many years. In some cases the environment is no longer suitable for the tenants needs. Similarly,

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some properties remain suitable but the level of staffing required to manage the tenant's safety leads to significant increase in the staffing costs. There are several properties where four tenants have access to three staff through waking hours (3:4); this contrasts to residential ratios of 6:1 and nursing of 4:1.

3.4 The Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities have been working alongside Strategic Housing to plan for meeting the longer term needs of these individuals in a more sustainable way. Adult Social Care have been involved in the planning and design of the property in Bredbury with a view to a larger group of individuals being able to have their own tenancy and live in a homely situation, while having access to the staffing levels they need to manage risks around moving and handling, dysphagia and wider health challenges

3.5 The proposed scheme to be developed by Mosscare St Vincent's (MSV) will also provide apartment accommodation for four complex individuals who currently have their own tenancies. This is intended to provide a more sustainable staffing model, for example by sharing staff at night, and to give a better infrastructure to staff who have faced challenges lone working with complex individuals and no immediate recourse to additional support.

3.6 Adult Social Care work alongside housing to ensure people are able to access the level of support they need. A mixed model of care is needed to address the diverse needs and aspirations of this client group and the Bredbury site offers a valuable opportunity to support two distinct groups within this cohort in a person centred, safe and more economically sustainable way.

4 Disposal at less than Best Consideration

4.1 The cost of developing specialist facilities of this nature can be considerable and the cost of this development is £ 1.7m. MSV have obtained grant funding from Homes England in the sum of £ 660k on the condition that the construction works start on site in financial year 2020/2021.

4.2 As a consequence of the costs of developing the scheme MSV have requested that the site be conveyed to them for nominal consideration. As the site is considered to have a market value this would be considered as a disposal at less than best consideration.

4.3 The Local Government Act 1972 Section 123 provides that the Council may dispose of land in any manner it sees fit subject to the constraint that a disposal must be for the best consideration. In certain circumstances however the law provides that authorities may dispose of land at less than best consideration.

4.4 The General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 provides a general consent removing the requirement for the Council to seek specific approval from the Secretary of State for a wide range of disposals at less than best consideration.

The Council have been granted consent in circumstances where:

(A) The difference between the unrestricted value of the land to be disposed does not exceed £2million; and

(B) The Council considers that the purpose for which the land in question is to be disposed is likely to contribute to the achievement of any one or more of the following objects in respect of the whole or any part of its area or of all or any person's resident or present in its area:

(i) The promotion or improvement of the economic well-being;

(ii) The promotion or improvement of social well-being; and
(iii) Environmental well-being.

5.0 **Financial Impact**

5.1 The proposed development is anticipated to benefit from economies of scale through a change in staffing establishments. Financial benefits realised would be reinvested into the service to maximise available budget, aligned to current demand for supported living services.

5.2 The Civic Hall has been vacant for a number of years due to condition issues and a lack of demand for the accommodation. Its market value has been considered by the Councils Surveyor and it is estimated that were the site to be offered with a policy compliant planning consent for residential development it would attract a value in the region of £ 275k (two hundred and seventy five thousand pounds).

5.3 The scheme proposed is considered to bring improvements to the lives of service users by providing modern accommodation suited to their current and future needs. In addition the Council will benefit from economies of scale through the proposed operation of the facility.

5.4 The Council will receive 100% nomination rights for users of the facility and the transfer of the site will contain restrictions on its alternative use in the unlikely event that it is deemed no longer suitable for clients of the Council. The nomination rights will remain in place until when or if the Council decides it no longer requires the facility or a new model presents itself.

5.5 Demand for supported living continues to grow and obtaining nomination rights at this new facility we consider will in part offset an anticipated increase in revenue costs over future years. This will optimise use of available resources

5.6 It is considered that the nomination rights and the efficiencies which the new facility will bring together with the improvements to the service the Council is able to offer people with a learning disability justifies both from a financial and Best Consideration perspective a disposal at nominal consideration to MSV.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1 Cabinet is recommended to:-

(a) Approve the conveyance of the site of the Bredbury Civic Hall to Mosscare St Vincent's for the development of a residential facility approved by the Councils Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Departments. Such disposal to be at nominal consideration having had regard to the provisions as set out in paragraph 5 of this report

(b) Any conveyance to be subject to the grant of planning consent and any other terms which the Councils Legal Officer considers appropriate. Such terms to include a restriction on the alternative use of the scheme.

6.2 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on the report.

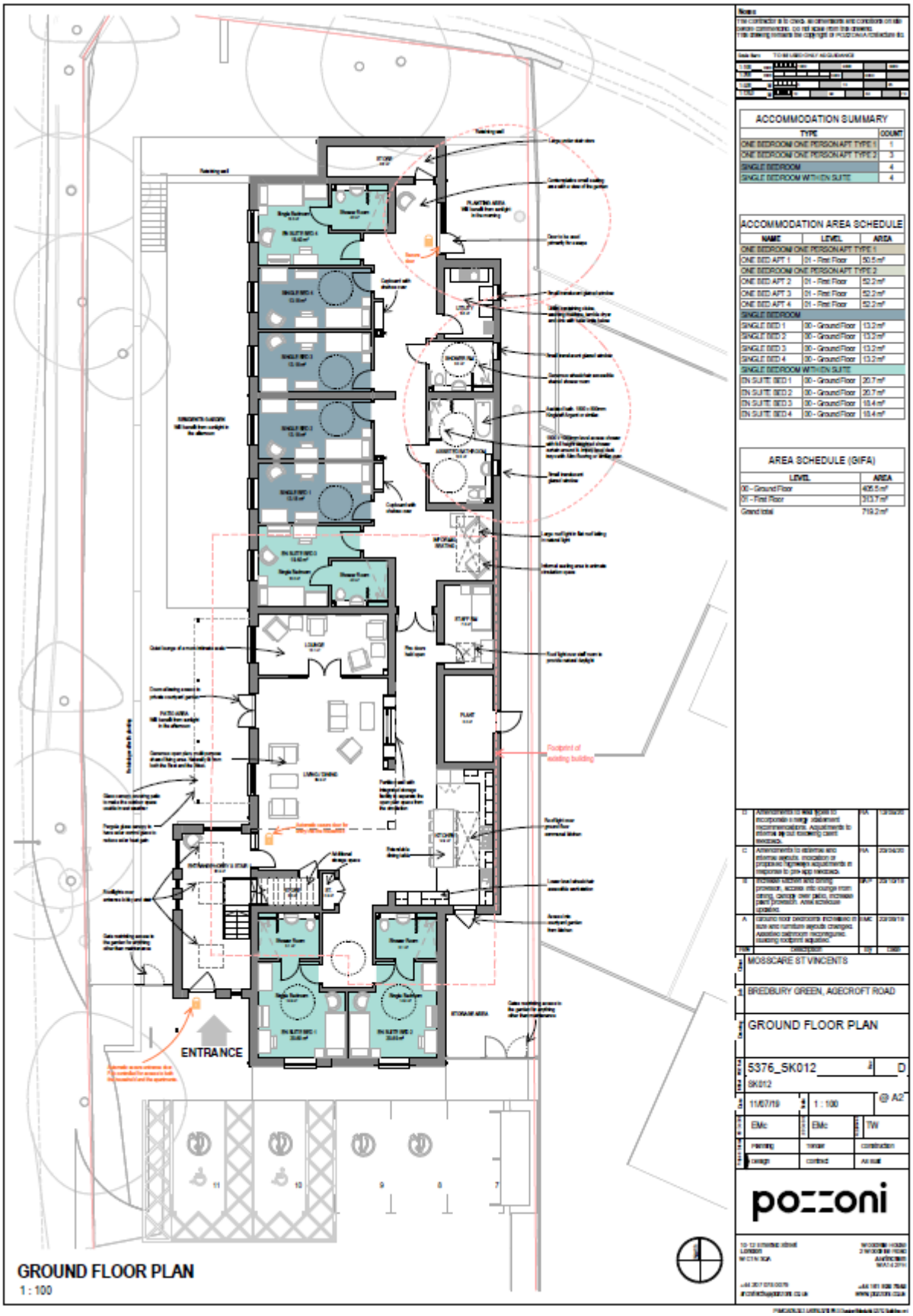
BACKGROUND PAPERS
None

Anyone requiring further information should contact Ian Keyte Tel: 0161 217 6907 or by email at ian.keyte@stockport.gov.uk

Site Location Plan property edged red



Scheme proposals ground floor



Scheme proposal's First Floor

