
Meeting: Executive
Date: 15 September 2009
Subject: Refurbishment of House 3 Houghton Lodge into Office accommodation
Report of: Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley - Portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Health
Summary: The report proposes that Executive endorse the refurbishment of House 3 at Houghton Lodge, Ampthill which is a domestic dwelling, into an office.

Advising Officer: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Contact Officer: Terry McEwen
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Ampthill
Function of: Executive
Key Decision: No
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate): N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive endorse the refurbishment of House 3 at Houghton Lodge Ampthill which is currently a domestic dwelling in to an office to allow 8 members of the commissioning team to be relocated along with the Assistant Director.

Background

- 1 This paper proposes a means of addressing the urgent requirements of the commissioning service through solving the problems of a dispersed and inadequately accommodated staff group.
- 2 Current arrangements are inefficient and impair performance. Greater efficiency will be achieved including the pooling of support staff.
- 3 The commissioning service consists of three groups of staff, Commissioning (with contract compliance) Personalisation and Partnerships. Staff are located over a number of sites including Borough Hall. The commissioning group has been prioritised as being most critical for the directorate recovery and improvement programme.

Objective

- 4 The priority for the service is to have this group of staff located together. Houghton Lodge is the preferred site as some staff are already there and there would be real service benefits from being close to operational colleagues
- 5 It would be desirable for the Assistant Director (AD) to have his/her main base there as more urgent issues arise in this area requiring regular contact with the Head of Commissioning.
- 6 There would be sufficient space at Houghton Lodge once some Borough staff relocate. However much needed extra space could be provided by bringing house 3 in to commission.

Scope

- 7 House 3 is the third house in a row of terraced houses on the site of Houghton Lodge in Ampthill. House 1 is occupied by the Emergency duty team .House 2 is occupied by a learning disabilities team and is the base of the Hub managing the flu pandemic response. House 3 was occupied until 6 months ago by a former member of staff who unfortunately passed away:-
- 8 House 3 is in a very poor state as the tenant was very ill and did not carry out cleaning or maintenance. It will require the following
 - Removal of all floor coverings
 - Removal of all curtains
 - Removal of kitchen units
 - Refurbishment of downstairs cloakroom
 - Replacement of central heating boiler
 - Supply and fit office quality lighting
 - Redecoration throughout
 - New carpets and blinds
 - Supply and installation of data and electrical points
 - Supply and installation of office furniture

Conclusion and Next Steps

- 9 The extra space provided by refurbishing house 3 in to office space would enable 8 members of the commissioning team to be relocated from Borough Hall and will help improve the performance of this important service.
- 10 Feasibility studies and cost estimates have been carried out and the scheme is ready to implement. It will only take 3 months to complete; a much shorter timescale than waiting for other possibilities.
- 11 Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG) support the commencement of this project.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

To support and care for an ageing population
To promote healthier lifestyles
Create safer communities

Financial:

Grant funding was agreed at the end of the last financial year of £78k to move the older people's team from the Leighton Buzzard Health Centre to Linslade school. This project is no longer required. Last year's capital funding of £78k forms part of unapproved slippage from Bedfordshire County Council for which Executive approval is required to allow the scheme to progress. A major report on the capital budget including slippage is planned for the October Executive. Nevertheless, this scheme is submitted for earlier Executive approval to proceed with the endorsement of the Corporate Asset Management Group. The capital grant which will cover all costs of this scheme is for general adult social care use and the change of project is permissible.

Legal:

None

Risk Management:

By moving the commissioning team to Ampthill the team members' time on the road is reduced

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

Appendices – Appendix A – Project Initiation Document

Background Information - None