

Cabinet Meeting Resolution

**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference**

E3541

Culverhay - Education Provision supporting the Safety Valve

Date of Meeting	6-Jun-24
The Issue	Redeployment of Culverhay for educational uses supporting our most vulnerable children by providing SEND and Alternative Provision needs of B&NES through redevelopment of the former Bath Academy school site.
The decision	<p>(1) To approve in principle the deployment of the Culverhay site for continued educational use to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) SEND Free Special School contracted with Three Ways Academy Trust (b) Alternative Provision School contracted with Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership Trust <p>(2) To approve in principle the release of surplus land for non-educational use to achieve best value for the Council.</p> <p>(3) To progress early clearance, demolition and site preparation to ready the site for school delivery.</p> <p>(4) To approve £200K for a Culverhay Re-provision for Project Feasibility Team from Schools Improvement Basic Needs Grant.</p> <p>(5) To delegate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The decision on preferred delivery option to officers in consultation with portfolio holders and the Cabinet Member for Resources. (b) The decision on commitments to fund abnormal costs and additional requirements from Council Basic Need and SEND grant funding to the Director of Education in consultation with the Section 151 Officer.
Rationale for decision	<p>The current offer from the DfE is to deliver the construction of both schools directly. B&NES will be required to provide the cleared, enabled site, meeting any costs that are outside the normal specification prescribed within Building Bulletin 104. DfE expect vacant possession in early 2025 with the site fully vacated and levelled (demolition) ready for handover (construction) later in the same year.</p> <p>To proceed, the Council now needs to confirm the site and make available for this education purpose.</p>

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	<p>SEND Free School and AP Alternative Provision School meet differing educational needs so shared facilities are limited. The SEND Free School is the only provision suited for shared community leisure provision and the current plan also now incorporates a hydrotherapy pool.</p>
<p>Other options considered</p>	<p>Following the successful bid for the new free special school the DfE informed the LA that there would be no further progress until a suitable site for the new school had been identified. we worked closely with the allocated DfE representative, and the government agency LocatED. LocatED were tasked with working with Local Authorities where no site had been identified. Following extensive investigation looking at availability of land in the areas of Keynsham, Chew and the Keynsham side of Bath and working with B&NES planners no suitable site could be identified as deliverable within the required funding timescale other than the use of the Culverhay site as outlined here.</p> <p>Leisure provision</p> <p>The current leisure facilities including the sports hall, fitness areas, outdoor courts and gym are operated by GLL on behalf of the council. The site does operate at a deficit. The swimming pool, which has been closed since Covid-19 restrictions were in place, has not been reopened due to high energy and chemical costs, cost of maintaining it and historical low usage.</p> <p>Fitness Facilities</p> <p>The Council and GLL have committed to investment opportunities at Odd Down Sports Ground with new fitness facilities and padel tennis courts. As such many current facilities at Culverhay will be provided at Odd Down Sports Ground. Odd Down Sports Ground is less than 1 mile from the Culverhay site. Current usage data suggests that 75% of users of the Culverhay Leisure facilities live in Odd Down with easy access to the Odd Down Sports Ground facilities.</p> <p>Sports Hall</p> <p>Evidence from Sport England suggests that Bath and North East Somerset currently has a good range of sports hall facility provision spread across the main population centres. However, to meet demand the Council-owned sites (Bath Sport and Leisure Centre, Keynsham Leisure Centre and Culverhay Leisure Centre) are being utilised at 100% capacity at peak times.</p> <p>Bath Sports and Leisure Centre and Keynsham Leisure Centre have been extensively refurbished and modernised in the last six years. However, Culverhay Leisure Centre is 33 years old and was refurbished more than 15 years ago.</p> <p>A new sports hall facility should have a focus as a dual use community sports facility run by the education provider. This is a cost-effective model on an education site and is a solution found on many school sites.</p>

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Swimming Pool

Sport England Facilities Planning data suggests that Bath and North East Somerset has a good mix and balance of swimming pool provision, with sufficient available capacity to meet demand. There is insufficient unmet demand to consider building a new swimming pool at this location. Specialist teaching pools have been built at Bath and Keynsham with appropriate modern changing facilities. The SEND School will incorporate a Hydrotherapy Pool.

The Decision is subject to Call-In within 5 working days of publication of the decision