

Single Member Cabinet Decision**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference****E 3038****To close the remaining two Council run nurseries and support the transfer of children's places to other providers in the local area and consider options for the two buildings**

Decision maker/s	Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
The Issue	<p>The Council has two remaining Nurseries; both are situated within the grounds of existing Primary Schools (one in Radstock, St. Nicholas Primary School, and the other in Bath on the St. Martin's Garden site). Over the past few months the Council have been actively engaging with a range of potentially interested organisations to explore the option of the School taking on the ownership and running of the nursery provision. However, no organisation has confirmed that they would wish to take on the running of the nurseries and TUPE staff to run the buildings.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to assess the local childcare market and to secure sufficient childcare for working parents. However we are not expected to provide childcare directly but will be expected to work with local private, voluntary and independent sector providers to meet local need.</p>
Decision Date	Not before 10 th March 2018
The decision	<p>The Cabinet Member agrees;</p> <p>A) The proposal for the two children's nurseries to close, while staff work with local private nurseries and other providers including child minders to ensure where possible, appropriate levels of placement sufficiency in both areas. In addition, staff will work with parents to ensure a smooth transition of placements over the coming months to ensure all young children have identified nursery or child care placements.</p> <p>B) To approve the likely staff redundancy costs which are currently estimated at £105k for staff that do not transfer to other posts within the council. In addition, the report requests agreement to dispose of surplus assets; Radstock nursery portable building, and nursery rooms/accommodation at St. Martin's Garden School.</p>
Rationale for decision	<p>Given the continued development of private nursery and child-minding provision across the B&NES area, it is right that the Council reviews its requirement to directly provide nursery placements for young children. The private market has an established record of providing these resources more efficiently than the Council can</p>

	<p>provide.</p> <p>Recent reviews of sufficiency show that private provision is at, or near to levels that would allow all existing places provided by the Council to be taken up by private nurseries. Where the sufficiency is slightly lower (Radstock), we are confident that we can use the ensuing months to work with providers to increase capacity sufficiently to ensure all children will be able to find alternative provision.</p>
Financial and budget implications	<p>These building related proposals will potentially allow for capital receipts on the sale/lease of both remaining buildings and land currently owned by the Council. The proposal to close both of the remaining Nurseries would mean a number of existing staff being made redundant. An initial review of costs indicates that if all staff were to be made redundant this would cost £105k from the Council reserves set aside for such situations.</p> <p>Currently both nurseries employ 26 people or 20 FTE of this 24 people are likely to be made redundant.</p> <p>The Council owns the grounds and buildings in which both Nurseries are located. Both Nurseries are located within existing Primary School grounds. It is possible that each School would be interested in obtaining the vacant rooms, grounds should the nursery buildings be vacated.</p>
Issues considered (these are covered in more detail in the report)	Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Equality (age, race, disability, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation); Human Rights; Corporate.
Consultation undertaken	Ward Councillor; Cabinet colleagues; Trades Unions; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer.
How consultation was carried out	Throughout the process of discussing the future of the remaining nurseries, we have kept staff fully engaged. We have communicated with parents and notified them of the possibility of the closure of the nurseries and the likely time-scale for this. We have also been in communication with Trade Unions and local Councillors.
Other options considered	The Council has actively explored whether or not other private providers could take on the running of the nurseries. However, it will also be important to acknowledge that feedback from potential providers has consistently been that this would be difficult due to some of the potential financial implications of TUPE costs.
Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision, including any dispensation granted:	Not applicable in this instance.

Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:	None
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Signatures of Decision Makers	
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Date of Signature	
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Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision
