

If you are reading this electronically, the Council has saved **£0.33** on printing. For more information on the Mod.gov paperless app, contact Democratic Services

Merton Council

Cabinet

15 July 2019

Supplementary agenda

16 Disposal of Worsfold House, Mitcham
Equalities Assessment attached.

1 - 10

This page is intentionally left blank

Equality Analysis



Please refer to the guidance for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments is available on the intranet
Text in blue is intended to provide guidance – you can delete this from your final version.

What are the proposals being assessed?	Worsfold House, Church Road, Mitcham
Which Department/ Division has the responsibility for this?	Environment and Regeneration. Sustainable Communities

Stage 1: Overview	
Name and job title of lead officer	Howard Joy, Property Management and Review Manager
1. What are the aims, objectives and desired outcomes of your proposal? (Also explain proposals e.g. reduction/removal of service, deletion of posts, changing criteria etc)	The proposal is to declare the property surplus to requirements and to sell the property to Clarion Housing Group to achieve a capital receipt, the provision of additional housing through the redevelopment, increased pace of regeneration of the Eastfields Estate and additional nomination rights on Eastfields Estate for the Council.
2. How does this contribute to the council's corporate priorities?	Additional housing, capital and nomination rights.
3. Who will be affected by this proposal? For example who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc.	<p>The tenant: Evolve Housing. The occupiers of Worsfold House. They are (NB Information obtained from their websites where available):</p> <p><u>Blessed Education</u>. Provide day, full, or part time education for ages 7 to 11. Alternative Education – aimed at children who do not accelerate at same speed as their counterparts, perhaps English being second language, behavioural problems or SEN. Also provide a Saturday morning as a 'learn new skills' course – helps children reach full potential.</p> <p><u>Delrose Earl Training</u>. A people centred social firm providing routes to employment, education, professional development and personal empowerment. Against backdrop of declining unemployment there are pockets of high-level underemployment leading to increase in children living in poverty in UK. More people not claiming benefits but economically inactive with desire to find work. They develop intervention packages that are sold to organisations that procure their services.</p> <p><u>ReesUK Training & Employment</u>. Specialise in delivering training for learners who are out of work. They</p>

and all of their clients are funded through the Skills Funding Agency, They won 'London Learning Consortium Training Provider of the Year 2018'.

Henace & Co. Cleaning Service – cannot find that they provide work or services for anyone in particular. Their website does not work, but they are on Facebook.

Jus”T”Learn. Independent School & Tuition Centre. Private tuition centre which is DFES registered Independent School and Ofsted registered Private Tuition Centre. Caters for learners from all walks of life. Main purpose to provide personalised learning experience. They do provide a service for learners with SEN, (Special educational needs), at their centres and in their own homes.

Merton Centre for Independent Living. The only user-led, pan-Disability Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation in Merton. They advise that they deliver 1500 sessions of Advice and Advocacy support a year, covering benefits, community care, and hate crime against Disabled People.

Progressive Telemarketing. They are a progressive organic agency providing new business outreach. They say they have significant experience working with businesses within the B2B/B2C services sectors Do not claim to help any special organisations.

Prospect Training Services. Create courses tailored to individual needs.

PTS say they have a wealth of knowledge and experience amassed over the years from working locally, regionally nationally and internationally. They say they have the skills and experience to write, accredit and deliver bespoke training solutions, to whoever needs them, wherever their location.

Reed in Partnership. Deliver training and employability contracts for the DWP, ERSA and LA's. They are currently the provider for the Work and Health Programme – Better Working Futures in the South London Alliance boroughs.

Skills Development Training. Educational Support Services. No website found.

Talk Off the Record. Offer counselling and support to young people in the borough (11 to 25 yrs) with a drop in service on Wednesday afternoons. Not sure who is based there and whether they offer anymore services from the office, they are a registered charity.

Training & Recruitment Partnership. Independent learning provider, deliver apprenticeships and traineeships, also training programmes. Ensure their programmes match potential employer's business priorities. Raising standards in adult learning and helping young people into employment. They are not

	<p>aimed at any particular special needs that can be identified.</p> <p>The proposals will benefit the occupiers of Eastfields Estate and those currently without decent housing. The proposals will benefit the council by improving the provision and quality of housing in the borough and provide a capital receipt to add to the corporate pot.</p>
<p>4. Is the responsibility shared with another department, authority or organisation? If so, who are the partners and who has overall responsibility?</p>	<p>Worsford House is owned by Merton Council and as such the council has overall responsibility for the building.</p>

Stage 2: Collecting evidence/ data

5. What evidence have you considered as part of this assessment?

Provide details of the information you have reviewed to determine the impact your proposal would have on the protected characteristics (equality groups).

Following vacation of the property by the council the intention was to dispose of the site but sale was delayed until the property needs of Cricket Green school were confirmed. Any use of the building would therefore be short term so not to frustrate future sale. In compliance with this policy, the property was leased to Grenfell Housing Association as a pop up resource centre under a Tenancy at Will dated 29th April 2013. The Tenancy at Will could be ended at any time upon one months' notice. Following merger with Grenfell the tenancy was transferred to Evolve Housing who on 19th June 2019 gave formal notice to the council that they would be ending their tenancy of the Wandle Valley Resource Centre, Worsfold House, Church Road, Mitcham on 30th November 2019. They were only required to give one month's notice, but chose to give a longer notice period. Evolve also confirmed that they would be writing to the other occupants of the building, giving them notice on their facilities sharing agreements, to end on the same date.

Evolve's sub-tenants (outlined in section 2 above) provide a range of services. Some of the organisations provide advocacy support, employment skills training, educational support, and counselling for disabled residents, young people and unemployed residents or those on low incomes. Services are provided to some of the borough's vulnerable residents.

Page 4

Stage 3: Assessing impact and analysis

6. From the evidence you have considered, what areas of concern have you identified regarding the potential negative and positive impact on one or more protected characteristics (equality groups)?

Protected characteristic (equality group)	Tick which applies		Tick which applies		Reason Briefly explain what positive or negative impact has been identified
	Positive impact		Potential negative impact		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Age			X		Many provide employment skills training, counselling and educational support
Disability			X		Some of the organisations provide advocacy and skills training
Gender Reassignment					
Marriage and Civil Partnership					

Pregnancy and Maternity					
Race			X		Many provide employment skills training
Religion/ belief					
Sex (Gender)					
Sexual orientation					
Socio-economic status			X		Many provide employment skills training

7. If you have identified a negative impact, how do you plan to mitigate it?

On the 5th July 2019 the Council emailed the occupiers offering the contact details of the Property Management and Review Manager and Programme Manager to discuss their concerns or to help with alternative accommodation. As there is limited available and suitable space within the Council's ownership only Vestry Hall or a unit in 75-77 Canterbury Road were able to be proposed (Chaucer Centre having no space available). However, the council would try to help identify property within the private sector.

At the time of writing this assessment the response is as follows:

1. Blessed Education. No response but took a lease from the council on 20th September 2018 of 328 London Road, Mitcham that provides alternative accommodation.
2. Delrose Earl Training. No response.
3. ReesUK. No response.
4. Henace & Co. No response.
5. Just"t"Learn. No response.
6. Merton CIL. Have stated that the council's property is unsuitable but have asked for help.
7. Progressive Telemarketing. No response.
8. Prospects. No response.
9. Reed. Have expressed an interest in the Canterbury Road unit.
10. Skills Development Training. No response.
11. Talk Off the Record. No response but already occupy space within Vestry Hall.
12. Training and Recruitment Partnership. No response.

Page 6

Stage 4: Conclusion of the Equality Analysis

8. Which of the following statements best describe the outcome of the EA (Tick one box only)

Please refer to the guidance for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments is available on the intranet for further information about these outcomes and what they mean for your proposal

- Outcome 1** – The EA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact and all opportunities to promote equality are being addressed. No changes are required.
- Outcome 2** – The EA has identified adjustments to remove negative impact or to better promote equality. Actions you propose to take to do this should be included in the Action Plan.
- Outcome 3** – The EA has identified some potential for negative impact or some missed opportunities to promote equality and it may not be possible to mitigate this fully. If you propose to continue with proposals, you must include the justification for this in Section 10 below, and include actions you propose to take to remove negative impact or to better promote equality in the Action Plan. You must ensure that your proposed action is in line with the PSED to have 'due regard' and you are advised to seek Legal Advice.



Outcome 4 – The EA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. Stop and rethink your proposals.

Stage 5: Improvement Action Pan

9. Equality Analysis Improvement Action Plan template – Making adjustments for negative impact

This action plan should be completed after the analysis and should outline action(s) to be taken to mitigate the potential negative impact identified (expanding on information provided in Section 7 above).

Negative impact/ gap in information identified in the Equality Analysis	Action required to mitigate	How will you know this is achieved? e.g. performance measure/ target)	By when	Existing or additional resources?	Lead Officer	Action added to divisional/ team plan?
Closure of Worsford House has negative impact on Age, Disability, Race and Socio-Economics	Seek suitable alternative accommodation	Occupier relocated	30/11/2019	Existing	Howard Joy/Sara Williams	No

Page 8

Note that the full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented; therefore it is important the effective monitoring is in place to assess the impact.

Stage 6: Reporting outcomes

10. Summary of the equality analysis

This section can also be used in your decision making reports (CMT/Cabinet/etc) but you must also attach the assessment to the report, or provide a hyperlink

This Equality Analysis has resulted in an Outcome 3 Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative impact has been identified because the services provided by the sub-tenants support young people, disabled residents and residents on lower incomes. Some the SMEs are led by BAME staff. The council is committed to working with the sub-tenants to seek suitable alternative accommodation

Stage 7: Sign off by Director/ Head of Service

Assessment completed by	Howard Joy. Property Management and Review Manager	Signature:	Date:
Improvement action plan signed off by Director/ Head of Service	James McGinlay. Assistant Director for Sustainable Communities	Signature:	Date:

This page is intentionally left blank