

Report for: Cabinet 10th December 2019

Title: The Acquisition of a former NHS building in Burgoyne Road, Wood Green

Report

authorised by : Dan Hawthorn, Director Housing, Regeneration and Planning
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Lead Officer: Christine Addison, Assistant Director Capital Projects and Property (Interim)
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Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Key decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 The former NHS building in Burgoyne Road (“Property”), is a former Clinic located in Wood Green which has been listed and advertised for disposal by Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health National Health Service Trust. The Property is shown edged red on the plan attached at Appendix A and has been offered for sale to the Council on the basis of Freehold with vacant possession subject to contract.
- 1.2 The acquisition will be held in the General Fund and will benefit the Council by enabling the delivery of a refuge facility for survivors of domestic abuse to serve the need in the Borough.
- 1.3 This report sets out the basis of the proposal to acquire the Property and the feasibility work required to set up the proposed use as a refuge facility for survivors of domestic abuse.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 I am delighted to present this report which offers an opportunity for the Council to acquire a building from a local NHS Trust, which is currently unused, in order to create a refuge facility for survivors of domestic abuse and so to better meet local needs. The model of refuge provision proposed here is progressive and will change the local response to women escaping domestic abuse over time.
- 2.2 Haringey is keen to meet residents’ needs by creating more borough based support and investing in new models of support for those who are affected by domestic abuse. By acquiring this building and securing a continued community use in the heart of Haringay, specifically targeting support on those who often face barriers to achieving positive outcomes, we believe we will have a positive impact on the wider population of Haringey to the benefit of all residents.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Cabinet are requested to:

- a) Agree the acquisition of the freehold interest in the property known as the former NHS Clinic, Burgoyne Road, Wood Green (as shown edged in red on the plan in Appendix A) from the Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health National Health Service Trust for the purposes set out in section 6. of this report and for a sum set out in Part B of the report plus estimated costs of acquisition set out in Part B of the report.
- b) note that following a period of options appraisal, cost and development planning, a further report will be brought back to Cabinet for approval of the final business case for the site. This will include a plan which will include detailed designs, capital and revenue costs for the preferred option and a funding, delivery and operation strategy.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The Council are in a position to acquire the freehold of the building from the NHS Trust prior to the property being marketed for sale in the open market. A price has been agreed on the basis that the price represents best consideration to the NHS. Should the Council withdraw then the site is likely to be marketed on the open market.
- 4.2 The acquisition of the property will enable the Council to take forward the proposal to refurbish or develop the site for a new facility to provide a refuge facility for survivors of domestic abuse. This will bring a currently vacant NHS building into use for an important Council service need supporting the Council's current Borough Plan needs.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 The alternative is not to acquire the freehold interest in the property. This would forfeit the opportunity to provide a much needed refuge facility for survivors of domestic abuse at this site.

6. Background information

The property

- 6.1 The NHS Trust have declared this site surplus to requirements and have expressed a desire to sell the site. The Council have been in discussion with the NHS Trust and have agreed terms to acquire the site. The building is located roughly halfway along Burgoyne Road, which runs east to west between Green Lanes/A105 and Wightman Road/B138. Haringay Green Lanes station is located 0.12 miles southeast of the subject property and Haringay Station 0.19 miles to the southwest. There is a strong secondary retail offering on Green Lanes with a number of local retailers and restaurants. Currently, the site accommodates a two-storey health clinic constructed in the 1960s. It is of a brick construction with a flat roof and features a service alley/parking to the east side. The site comprises an approximate total of 0.0545 hectares / 0.135 acres with the existing building comprising a net internal area of 3,809 sq. ft. The gross internal area is approximately 4,133 sq. ft.

Overview of proposed use

- 6.2 Haringey has one of the highest rates of reported domestic abuse across London. In the rolling year to March 2019, there were 5,204 domestic incidents with 3,304 domestic abuse offences reported to the police. Haringey currently has the sixth highest incident rate per 1000 population (18.9 per 1000); Barking and Dagenham has the highest with 22.8 per 1000. In the same period, 776 sexual offences (with 346 of those being rape) were recorded, which represents a nearly 10% increase in sexual offences from the previous 12-month period. It is estimated that nearly 3,500 women and girls are affected by Female Genital Mutilation in Haringey with 110 new cases reported between April 2017 and March 2018. There are high but hidden levels of forced marriage and crimes committed in the name of 'honour', with 37 cases identified during the audit in 2018.
- 6.3 Against that backdrop the borough has a strong commitment to tackle gender-based violence as set out in the Borough Plan (2019-2023).

Refuge provision

- 6.4 As well as supporting survivors directly, refuge services provide significant added value. Refuges deliver a wide range of services that are not part of the contracted work, such as prevention and awareness-raising in local communities and supporting women through the criminal justice system and in court. They provide critical training and strategic advice to the NHS, to police, and to social care agencies. This enables statutory organisations to not only identify victims of domestic abuse, but to also ensure that women and their children are able to seek support and access refuge safely and appropriately. Refuges are integral to a holistic 'whole housing' response to domestic abuse and underpin robust responses from statutory agencies, who rely on these services to refer families in need of support. For women, they offer a safe haven which thereby avoids further harm and the need for costly interventions, often initially through the NHS and Police.

6.5 Many refuges are provided in buildings that are no longer fit for purpose and the sector is concerned about its ability to respond to the needs of women with physical disabilities or mobility issues. Data on vacancies collected by Women's Aid between April 2017 and March 2018 showed that only 1.7% of total refuge vacancies are fully wheelchair accessible. Capital investment is urgently required to build new and refurbish old accommodation. This is essential if the refuge network is to meet the needs of all women and allow all women to be able to access any refuge with good quality responsive accommodation, which is, for example, wheelchair accessible, and has dedicated play and therapy spaces and interview rooms/office space in all refuges.

Benefits

6.6 As referenced above, refuges are an integral part of a holistic service response to the needs of women experiencing domestic violence. Whilst refuges are fully funded by local authorities, the benefits of their existence do not accrue only to local government but across the public sector, including flowing directly to the NHS.

Financial considerations

6.7 Violence against women and girls is estimated to cost the borough £27.6 million a year, which does not include the human and emotional costs (estimated at £47.6m).

6.8 Physical and mental health care are estimated to cost £8.3 million directly to the NHS through attendances at Emergency Departments, admissions following emergency attendances, primary and secondary care mental health services and primary care physical health services.

6.9 A recent study carried out at North Middlesex University Hospital of 10,000 patient records, identified 743 injured women aged 16-65 as experiencing domestic abuse. A similar study in the Royal Free Hospital identified that for 833 patients screened positive for domestic abuse across community gynaecology, the ED found overall attendance rates at ED were higher for those identified as experiencing domestic abuse than for those screening negative (RR 1.63). This meant 25,829 attendances per 100,000 as against 15,836 per 100,000 in the general population. In the same population, there were more emergency inpatient admissions in the 3 years preceding the screening for those screened as positive compared with those screened negative – RR 2.27. Day case admissions were also higher – RR2.03.
(Warren-Gash, C., Bartley, A., Bayly, J. *et al.* (2016) 'Outcomes of domestic violence screening at an acute London trust: are there missed opportunities for intervention?' *British Medical Journal*).

6.10 The expectation of a fully functioning and fit for purpose refuge site and service, is that identification and implementation of immediate support will reduce both ED attendances and any requirement for emergency inpatient admissions, as well as the number of outpatient appointments. Based on an estimated cost of £400 per outpatient appointment, and given that Emergency admissions have increased by 48% from 2005/2006 to 2015/2016 in the UK (Steventon, A. *et al.* 2017), and given that North Middlesex Hospital Trust (NMUH) reported 171,840 (52% female patients) attendances in 2015/2016 to their Emergency Department alone, the direct financial benefits and indeed savings quickly add up.

- 6.11 The knock-on impact for children and wider family members of domestic abuse should also be considered – 73% of all children’s social care referrals involve domestic abuse with future impacts for CAMHS and other NHS provision.
- 6.12 In addition, domestic violence has costs across the public sector including to: Social Services £1.4 million, housing at £0.9 million and lost economic output as £9.2 million. Research conducted by the Home Office^[1] as recently as this year has shown that domestic abuse has even higher costs – with £34,015 per victim/survivor of VAWG meaning that in Haringey the costs of domestic abuse is actually likely to be in excess of £140 million. This figure does not include the costs of domestic abuse involving children. Improving our response to addressing violence against women and girls through a strategic approach will improve women and girls lives and also reduce costs to Haringey.
- 6.13 The Social Return on Investment (SROI) for Refuge is calculated to be 4.94:1. This means that for every £1 invested, clients, their families and society-at-large reap a reward equivalent to £4.94. (Refuge SROI). For every £1 on MARAC, £6 public funding saved , up to £740m in the UK every year. (Safe Lives report)
- 6.14 The proposed use will attract capital grant from the GLA, which has provisionally been agreed as set out in Part B of the report dependent on the number of units. Revenue funding is already committed and is held in Commissioning/Public Health. This project would create a new physical environment to replace three existing services.

Operational considerations

- 6.15 Exploring new models of refuge provision is a key aspect of our aspirations for Burgoyne Road. In particular, the intention is to develop the provision as an ‘Open Refuge’, this means that unlike the majority of other refuge provision in England it will not be at a secret address and will provide refuge accommodation and support as an early intervention for local residents, not for those who we fear are at risk of extreme violence who would be supported to leave the borough.
- 6.16 The delivery of a trauma-informed service on the site is key, and this will flow from building design and layout to the support available and how security is managed. As such our intention is to develop the service in collaboration with survivors of domestic abuse who have previously lived in refuge accommodation, to embed their experiences and insights at the heart of building and service design.

Best Value

- 6.17 The Council has been advised by its property adviser Carter Jonas on the transaction. They are of the view that the agreed figure as set out in Part B of the report reflects a reasonable price reflecting the current use and the off market nature of the deal. There are acquisition costs as set out in Part B of the report for the transaction covering SDLT and estimated internal costs.

Feasibility study

6.18 A condition survey of the building is being undertaken and will inform a feasibility appraisal for the building. This will include options for the refurbishment and remodelling of the building and the redevelopment of the site. Once the study has been completed a further report obtaining options appraisal, cost planning and development planning will be brought to Cabinet with a proposal for the refurbishment or redevelopment of the building. Should the proposal prove unviable the site would be suitable for a residential development to be carried out.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1 The acquisition of the building will contribute to the Council's strategic outcomes as follows:

People - our vision is a Haringey where strong families, strong networks and strong communities nurture all residents to live well and achieve their potential – this is achieved through the provision of the refuge centre

Place - a place with strong, resilient and connected communities where people can lead active and healthy lives in an environment that is safe, clean and green– through continuity in the provision of the refuge centre

Economy - a growing economy which provides opportunities for all our residents and supports our businesses to thrive – Enabling employment in the refuge centre

Housing - a safe, stable and affordable home for everyone, whatever their circumstances Through the potential provision of new supported housing/extra care.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance

8.1 The report is recommending that Burgoyne Road is acquired for the sum set out in Part B of the report plus associated transaction costs. The acquisition will be funded from the approved capital programme scheme 482 Strategic Property. The Strategic Property budget is included in the capital programme on the basis that it is self-financing and to date has not incurred any expenditure. The overall budget of £19.640m contains provision for this acquisition as set out in Part B of the report.

8.2 It is anticipated that the property will be used as a refuge for survivors of domestic abuse. At this stage it is not clear whether or not the facility will be refurbished or rebuilt. Within the Council's draft capital programme for 2020/21 elsewhere on the agenda there is an allowance of £3.0m for the works required to the property to make it fit for purpose. The decision on refurbishment versus rebuild will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet which will include both the revenue and capital cost of the proposed provision. It appears likely that the development will attract grant from the GLA which will contribute to the scheme being self-financing.

- 8.3 Currently the provision of refuge services is undertaken from three sites, two of which the Council owns in the HRA. Should the decision be taken to rebuild/refurbish the facility then the two Council owned buildings would become available for use.
- 8.4 However, if the conclusion of the study is that neither rebuild/refurbishment is viable then the property could be appropriated to the HRA. The appropriation to the HRA would also be subject to an approved business case to ensure its viability in the HRA.
- 8.5 Finally, should the HRA business conclude that the appropriation is not viable, then alternative an alternative use will need to be found (including sale).

Procurement

- 8.6 Procurement comments are not applicable for property and land transactions, as they sit outside of the Procurement Contract Regulations.

Legal

- 8.7 The Council has the power under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 to acquire by agreement for the purposes of the benefit, improvement or development of its area any land, whether situated inside or outside its area. The property will be held in the General Fund and should the Council then decides to use the property for housing purposes then it will have to be appropriated for that purpose.

Equality

- 8.8 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 8.9 The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 8.10 The proposed decision is for the Council to acquire the freehold interest in the property known as the former NHS Clinic, Burgoyne Road, Wood Green. The acquisition will enable the delivery of a refuge facility for survivors of domestic abuse to serve the need in the Borough. This represents a step to address an inequality that affects women and girls and is likely to lead to positive outcomes for women and children. Steps will be taken to ensure that the premises is accessible to all women who share the protected characteristics.
- 8.11 The proposed decision represents a means of supporting the delivery of Haringey's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy. An Equalities Impact

Assessment for the strategy was published online in 2016 and is accessible here: <http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s88952/EQIA.pdf>. It notes that the majority of MARAC referrals are for women from BAME backgrounds, that women with disabilities are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than women without disabilities, and that the risks of experiencing violence increase during pregnancy. The proposed decision can therefore be expected to benefit women who share the protected characteristics of disability, race/ethnicity, and pregnancy and maternity to the extent that these characteristics increase their vulnerability to experiencing domestic abuse.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Site Plan

Appendix B – Heads of terms - exempt

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

a. No background papers

b. This report contains exempt and non exempt information. Exempt information is contained within Part B and **is not for publication**. The exempt information is under the following category (identified in amended schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972):

10.S. (3) Information relating to financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Appendix A – Site Plan



Appendix B -Heads of terms

Set out in Part B of the report.

