

	Cabinet 14 October 2024
	Report from the Corporate Director, Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services
	Lead Member - Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Muhammed Butt)
Families Homelessness Service Relocation	
Wards Affected:	Wembley Park, Roundwood
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	Two Appendix 1: Works floor plan Appendix 2: Equalities Impact Assessment
Background Papers:	
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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report concerns the Families Homelessness Service and proposals for its relocation to the New Millennium Centre in the context of the homelessness emergency and the approval of authority to tender for a provider to carry out works to fit out designated spaces at the new location as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

2.0 Recommendations for Cabinet:

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve proposals for a relocation of the Families Homelessness Service from the Brent Civic Centre, Wembley to the New Millennium Centre, Roundwood.

- 2.2 Subject to approval of Recommendation 2.1, approve the inviting of tenders to deliver the works to fit out the designated spaces at the New Millennium Centre on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.2.19 of the report.
- 2.3 Approves Officers evaluating the tenders referred to in 2.2 above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.2.19 of the report
- 2.4 Note that the Corporate Director, Partnerships Housing and Resident Services in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing will use powers delegated under the Constitution to award the contract for works to fit out designated spaces at the new Millennium Centre.
- 2.5 Approve the use of £400k of capital budget to undertake the works.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 This report sets out proposals for a relocation of the Families Homelessness Service to the New Millennium Centre, which will be host to a wider Community Wellbeing Programme of support. The proposed relocation aligns with the Council's commitment to create long lasting positive change to local areas, for the benefit of local communities and aligns with the Borough Plan 2023 - 2027 priorities of 'Thriving Communities', 'A Healthier Brent' and 'Prosperity and Stability in Brent'. Proposals are also in line with Brent's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025.
- 3.1.2 The proposals closely align with Brent's new Strategic Change Programme, including enabling outcome-focused approaches that support residents through a model of preventative and integrated Brent Council, VCS and partner services that respond to local need.
- 3.1.3 Refurbishment works at the New Millennium Centre will provide purpose-built and refurbished facilities for services and service users which will also support outcomes of 'Easing the Cost-of-Living Crisis' for our residents.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to assess applications from homeless households, pursuant to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Housing Act 1996, Part 7 (the 1996 Act).
- 3.2.2 The service is currently based in the Brent Civic Centre and is responsible for assessing homelessness applications from families with dependent children and pregnant women. The service has been experiencing high demand for the past 2 years, due to the national housing crisis and sees an average of 61 families per week. There has also been a recent influx of larger families, many of whom come directly to the Civic Centre at the point they become homeless.

3.2.3 The New Millennium Centre, 1 Robson Avenue, NW10 3SG, Roundwood, has been identified as a possible site for relocation of the service.

New Millennium Centre

3.2.4 On 5th February 2024, Cabinet approved proposals to develop a new model of support for Brent residents. The ambition is to provide a multifaceted programme including the space, tools and knowledge to support residents to improve their situation and increase opportunities, reducing long-term dependency on services.

3.2.5 The new model has been developed in accordance with the following Design Principles:

1. The model should support residents to become more resilient and independent.
2. The programmes and support available should be targeted and easily accessible to those who need them most.
3. The model should incentivise skills and employment and address physical and mental health challenges.
4. The model should align with and support connectivity between related support offers (including those detailed in the Brent [Cost-of-Living statement](#)).
5. Development of the model should be intelligence-led
6. The model should be sustainable.

3.2.6 The approved model includes a 'Community Wellbeing Service' – an expanded version of the Community Wellbeing Project piloted at Bridge Park Leisure Centre which supported up to 400 families per year with access to food and household essentials, as well as providing wraparound support to improve their situations in the longer-term.

3.2.7 The Community Wellbeing Service will operate five days per week at the New Millennium Centre, where it will be co-located with wider support provision, and will have capacity to support up to 1,000 families and residents per year. Eligibility for this expanded offer will include health needs, with health professionals, including GP Social Prescribers, Public Health Community Support Officers and BHM leads able to refer - increasing opportunities for closer, more integrated partnership working through the model.

3.2.8 Officers are currently completing a Procurement exercise for a Service Provider to deliver the Community Wellbeing Service from the New Millennium Centre on a 3-year contract term with a potential 2-year extension. The service will launch from 1 November 2024.

3.2.9 Management responsibility for the New Millennium Centre will transfer from Adult Social Care (ASC) to Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services in-line with the launch of the new service. ASC client groups that currently access a day support offer from the site will continue to do so on a sessional basis under new arrangements. This will be enabled through building works to develop a self-contained wing of the site, including dedicated entrance and

facilities to ensure safeguarding. This client group will also be able to access and benefit from the new wider suite of services delivered from the site, with support where required.

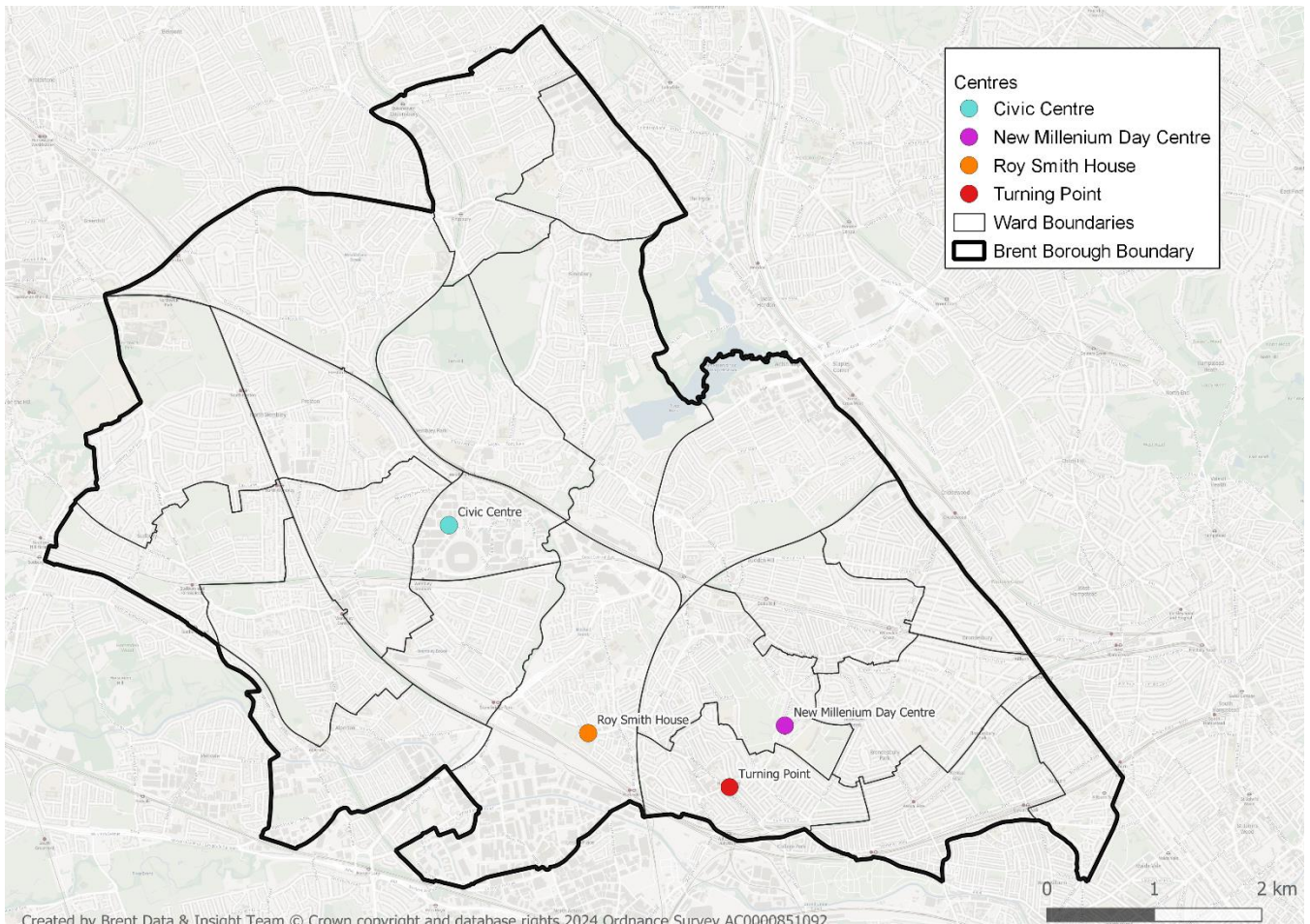
3.2.10 The New Millennium Centre site provides the space and core facilities required to deliver the expanded Kitchen, Café and Shop offer of the new Community Wellbeing Service, as well as make use of other on-site facilities including the garden. Additional spaces within the site provide opportunities to co-locate complementary offers such as Brent Hubs and specialist Debt and Immigration advice, as well as test new approaches. Appropriate site signage and branding is being developed.

3.2.11 The New Millennium Centre is accessible for residents including through 206, 226 and 6 Bus Routes and is located in a deprived area with low food accessibility (based on e-food desert index EFDI) and high levels of RSH applications and Council Tax Arrears. It is also within walking distance of the Willesden Centre for Health and Care (2 minutes) and both Harlesden and Willesden High Roads (15 minutes).

Opportunities

3.2.12 Relocation of the Family Homeless Service to the New Millennium Centre offers several opportunities. The site is located in the south of the borough, where the majority of homelessness demand comes from, and is walking distance from the Single Homeless Service at the Turning Point, The Design Works, Park Parade, Harlesden, NW10 4HT (10 minutes). It is also conveniently located a walking distance to the Crisis Skylight building (15 minutes) and Job Centre Plus Harlesden (15 minutes), both key partners in tackling the homelessness emergency.

Image 1: Map showing location of Brent Civic Centre, New Millennium Centre, The Turning Point and upcoming Roy Smith House community space



3.2.13 Locating the Family Homeless Service at New Millennium will benefit from co-location with other services designed to support vulnerable adults and families. This includes the expanded Community Wellbeing Service, which is targeted at families and provides wraparound and food support on a membership basis, with an expected evening free Community Kitchen meal service available to all (including non-members). Brent Hubs provision will also be available on site. The Brent Hubs already work directly with and alongside volunteer and charity organisations, such as Citizens Advice, Age UK, Brent Mind, and many others, enabling much clearer referral pathways and knowledge sharing.

3.2.14 Ahead of the 1 November 2024 launch of the Community Wellbeing Service, Phase 1 light refresh works to prepare the site are underway. Capital funding has been identified for a second phase of works, which are due to commence in late 2024 and will include development of the sessional use spaces outlined at paragraph 3.2.9.

3.2.15 It is proposed that the scope of these works is expanded to include further development of facilities and an area in the site for delivery of the Family Homeless Service.

3.2.16 Feasibility plans (included in appendix) show there is sufficient space to dedicate a reception and triage area with a waiting room, a separate admin office for staff, large interview room with interview booths, and an additional multipurpose room which can be used as an office or form filling/quiet space.

3.2.17 The primary goal of the proposals in this report is to empower residents to become more independent, yet during times of unprecedented crisis support will be available to help with immediate responses to issues such as homelessness risk. Co-location with wider services including Brent Hubs, debt and food support is expected help vulnerable families with wider challenges they may be facing.

3.2.18 The proposals in this report have the potential to support cost avoidance over the medium term by prevention of future rough sleeping, by prevention of future homelessness main duty acceptances, and by reduction in the future need for supported housing and adult social care services, through the intervention of support services to prevent the deterioration of mental health and improve access to employment and skills support. Examples of potential cost avoidance benefits to the council, partners and the wider system through early intervention approaches supported by this model are outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Example cost benefits

Need	Outcome and benefits	Who does this benefit accrue to?	Potential cost benefit per 1 unit Source: Greater Manchester New Economy Model: Cost Benefit Analysis Tool 2023¹ unless stated otherwise.
Mental Health	Reduced Health cost of interventions	NHS / Individuals	£4,671 – economic and fiscal value per person per year
Housing and Homelessness	Reduced Temporary Accommodation costs	Brent Council	£442.50 weekly *Source: Brent Council records, average weekly cost of a TA placement between 1 Apr 23 and 31 Dec 23
	Reduced B&B placements	Brent Council	Average £350 weekly for families
	Housing evictions – reduced costs of legal proceedings and repair of property	Housing provider	£6,680 per incident
Wellbeing	Increased wellbeing of the population	Individuals / society	£13,000 social benefit (pr one-point improvement in life satisfaction, per person per year)
	Alleviation of loneliness	Health and social care	Approx. £3 per £1 long-term return on investment *Source: LGA: Combating Loneliness, a guide for local authorities. ²
Employment	Increased employment:	DWP – JSA	£19,153 economic and fiscal value per claimant per year

¹ Greater Manchester New Economy Model: Cost Benefit Analysis Tool 2023 v5.1.2

² Case studies in Local Government Association’s Combating Loneliness: a guide for Local Authorities, page 14.

	1. Fiscal benefit of moving people off benefits and into work	DH – ESA	£15,963 economic and fiscal value per claimant per year
	2. Improved health outcomes	Individuals – Income Support	£10,504 economic and fiscal value per claimant per year
	3. Increased work		
Improved skill levels	Increase in earnings amongst residents achieving Level 2 NVQ and residents progressing to Level 3	Population without Level 2 qualifications	£443 economic and fiscal value

Pre-tender Considerations

3.2.19 The pre-tender considerations set out in Contract Standing Order 89 for procurement of the contract for Phase 2 of New Millennium Centre Works (the “Contract”) are as follows:

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
(i)	<i>The nature of the services / supplies / works.</i>	As detailed in Section 2 above.	
(ii)	The estimated value.	£400k	
(iii)	The contract term.	Estimated 12 weeks	
(iv)	The tender procedure to be adopted.	Restricted Procedure	
v)	The procurement timetable.	Stage in Procurement	Indicative dates
		Invite Tenders	21st October
		Deadline for submission of Tenders	4 th November
		Evaluation of Tenders	5 th – 11 th November
		Approval of award to most economically advantageous Tender	13 th November
		Contract start date	18th November
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
		Price	60%
		Quality	30%
		Social Value	10%

Ref.	Requirement	Response
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	No specific business risks are considered to be associated with entering into the Contract.
(viii)	The Council's Best Value duties.	It is considered that by adopting the procedure detailed in Section (iv) above, award will result in the Council achieving best value.
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	The Contract outcomes are designed to benefit those living in Brent.
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	There are no implications for Council staff arising from the procurement of the Contract.
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations	Financial – See Section 5 below
		Legal – See Section 6 below.
		Other – N/A
(xii)	Sustainability	The contract will be procured in line with the Sustainable Procurement Policy.
(xiii)	Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes	Performance will be inspected by adherence to project timelines and quality of works provided.
(xiv)	London Living Wage	The Contract will require the payment of the London Living Wage.
(xv)	Contract Management	A contract manager will be appointed and appropriate contract management provisions will be included in the Contract.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 Ward members are regularly updated regarding actions the Council is taking to minimise impacts of the Cost-of-Living crisis, including piloting of the Community Wellbeing Project and subsequent development of the Community Wellbeing Programme at the New Millennium Centre.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 The cost of the capital works requested in paragraph 3.2.19 to relocate the homelessness provision service to the south of the borough is estimated to cost £400,000. The work is expected to commence in November 2024 and finish in January 2025. This capital expenditure will be funded by borrowing, with an additional estimated £25,000 revenue interest cost. The relocation is expected to result in financial efficiencies to cover the revenue cost to fund the works.

5.2 A procurement tender process will be undertaken to assess bidders for the contract on quality and pricing. The Council will also assess the financial strength of the bidding companies to verify whether they will remain in business for the foreseeable future.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 The Families Homelessness Service assesses homelessness applications from families with dependent children and pregnant women to meet the Council's statutory duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Housing Act 1996, Part 7 to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

6.2 Recommendation 2.2. seeks approval to invite tenders to deliver works to fit out the designated spaces at the New Millennium Centre. The estimated value of the proposed Contract falls below the threshold for works under the Public Procurement Regulations 2015 (the "PCR 2015") and the procurement is therefore governed in part only by the PCR 2015.

6.3 The proposed procurement of a works contract is subject to the Council's own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in respect of Medium Value Contracts given the procurement is valued at £300,000 to £400,000. Cabinet has authority to approve the inviting of tenders (Standing Order 88) and to approve the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.2.19 above (Standing Order 89).

6.4 Once tendering of the contract has concluded and given that the contract is a Medium Value Contract, the Corporate Director has delegated authority pursuant to paragraph 9.5 of Part 3 of the Constitution to award the contract.

Legal property considerations

6.5 The Council has been granted a lease dated 10 December 1979 by The Secretary of State for Social Services of the New Millennium Centre ("the Lease"). The Lease is for a term of 99 years from 25 March 1979.

6.6 NHS Property Services Limited is the Council's current landlord ("the Landlord").

6.7 In accordance with the Lease, the Council are seeking the consent of the Landlord to undertake the works to the property as outlined in this report; and extend the permitted user clause in the Lease to allow for delivery of the services outlined in this report.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the "Public Sector Equality Duty"), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

7.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

7.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.

7.5 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 2.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 The works contract will be procured in line with the Sustainable Procurement Policy. The New Millennium Centre is on the boundary of the Church End & Roundwood Green Neighbourhood Pilot and officers are exploring how the centre and its users can contribute to and benefit from the wider green neighbourhood area.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 Property considerations are outlined in sections 6.4 – 6.6.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 Effective external communications will be key to ensuring residents are aware of the relocation of the families homelessness service and the wider support offer available at the New Millennium Centre as part of the Community Wellbeing Programme.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Corporate Director, Partnerships Housing and
Resident Services