

## **Summary Sheet**

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting: 10 October 2016

### **Title:**

The Rowan Centre – Lease of the Woodland Room

### **Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes, Key decision and is included on the Forward Plan.

### **Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

Damien Wilson, Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment.

### **Report Author(s)**

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### **Ward(s) Affected**

Rawmarsh

## **Summary**

The Rowan Centre is Rotherham's designated Health Pupil Referral Unit which includes the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS) education element and the Home Tuition Service. The Rowan Centre offers academic, pastoral care and guidance, family support and a therapeutic offer to some of Rotherham's children and young people with the highest levels of special education needs and those who are highly vulnerable.

The Rowan Centre building is small and the number of young person's using the service is growing considerably. As a consequence the service is oversubscribed with several children now needing to be educated outside the authority at a significantly higher cost.

Adjacent to the Rowan Centre is the Woodland Room which is a separate building and is part of the Monkwood Academy estate. The building has recently been vacated by the Monkwood Academy.

The use of this additional space would enable the Rowan Centre to accommodate the needs of an increasing number of younger children who have complex mental

health needs and in doing so allow the Council to intervene early and so avoid out of authority placements.

The purpose of this report is to request approval from Commissioner Kenny to permit the Council to enter into negotiations with the Wickersley Partnership Trust to take on a 10 year lease of the Woodland Room with an option to break after 5 years.

### **Recommendations**

1. That the proposal of a new 10 year lease, with an option to break after 5 years to Rotherham Borough Council, to allow the transfer of the Woodland Room be approved.
2. That the Assistant Director, Planning, Regeneration and Transport be authorised to negotiate the terms of the 10 year lease with an option to break after 5 years with the Wickersley Partnership Trust.
3. That the Assistant Director of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary documentation for the lease.

### **List of Appendices Included:**

Exempt Appendix 1 –: Initial discussions with the Wickersley Partnership Trust -

### **Background Papers:**

Letter from Victoria Woodrow, Head Teacher, the Rowan Centre.  
Site plan.

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel:**

No

### **Council Approval Required:**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public:**

The main report is open to the public, however Appendix 1 is exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as this appendix contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council)

## **Title: The Rowan Centre – Lease of the Woodland Room.**

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the proposal of a new 10 year lease, with an option to break after 5 years to Rotherham Borough Council, to allow the transfer of the Woodland Room be approved.
- 1.2 That the Assistant Director, Planning, Regeneration and Transport be authorised to negotiate the terms of the 10 year lease with an option to break after 5 years with the Wickersley Partnership Trust.
- 1.3 That the Assistant Director of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary documentation for the lease.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Rowan Centre is Rotherham's designated Health Pupil Referral Unit which includes the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAHMS) education element and the Home Tuition Service. The Rowan Centre offers academic, pastoral care and guidance, family support and a therapeutic offer to some of Rotherham's children and young people with the highest levels of special education needs and those who are highly vulnerable.
- 2.2 The Rowan Centre building is small and the numbers of young people accessing the service is growing; (doubled in size from January 2015 to January 2016).
- 2.3 Rotherham has ambitious plans to improve arrangements for children and young people with Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. The strategy '5 Steps to Collective Responsibility' sets out how this will be done. The Rowan Centre will play an important role in delivering this strategy but will need to increase their site space to enable the Rowan Centre to deliver the strategy and improve the outcomes for these vulnerable young people. See background papers - Letter from Victoria Woodrow, Head Teacher, the Rowan Centre.
- 2.4 On the adjoining Monkwood Academy School site there is a building called the Woodland Room. This building was transferred to the Academy Trust as part of the 125 year lease for the school site. See background papers.
- 2.5 The Woodland Room has been vacated by the Monkwood Academy and the Rowan Centre management team would like to take on a 10 year lease with an option to break after 5 years, for this building as it would provide the additional capacity they need to deliver the service and to improve the quality of their provision.

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 The Rowan Centre building is small and the numbers of young people accessing the service is growing; (doubled in size from January 2015 to January 2016).
- 3.2 The Rowan Centre building is not large enough to accommodate the nurture groups that are needed for the further development of the Key Stage (KS) 2 offer. KS2 relates to children who are aged from 7 years to 11 years old.
- 3.3 It is vital that the KS2 pupils that attend the Rowan Centre have access to an appropriate environment that is able to stimulate and support both their social and emotional needs as well as their academic needs. An environment that promotes the nurture approach to education is key to this in order to support pupils being able to access appropriate resources that are emotionally age appropriate both indoors and outdoors. This is essential to ensure that they are able to establish rhythm and routine and manage their behaviour and emotions. The use of the Woodland Room will enable this nurture approach and space for these young persons to develop.

### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 4.1 The Rowan Centre's staff are highly skilled and experienced in providing personalised education to children with very high levels of needs who cannot access mainstream sites either temporarily or permanently for a variety of reasons but are of mainstream ability. They are already proactively addressing the higher level of SEMH needs earlier, with more therapeutic intervention in order to provide improved services to young people and to reduce placements outside Rotherham. The Rowan Centre maintains links with mainstream colleagues in order to allow the children attending to access mainstream provision as and when appropriate. They are the only provider of this kind in Rotherham but places are limited. Other sites with this high level of expertise are unavailable without considerable building costs to the Council.
- 4.2 The Woodland Room offers a large classroom, an office that could be used as a therapeutic suite and an abundance of age appropriate outdoor space that would not only increase capacity to meet the growing need but enhance the highly specialist offer made at Rowan.
- 4.3 It is recommend that the Rowan Centre is permitted to take on a 10 year lease of the Woodland Room as soon as possible to continue to improve the early response to the needs and provision of SEMH needs to vulnerable children and young people.

### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The strategy for SEMH was widely consulted upon. The strategy was published and shared with stakeholders.

- 5.2 The main findings of the work done to develop the SEMH strategy were that exclusions within Rotherham were rising rapidly and causing concern for all stakeholders. Secondary permanent exclusion doubled year on year from 2013-2015 (from 12, to 24, then 50).
- 5.3 Schools and parents were concerned by rising levels of need, particularly mental health needs and poor CAMHS services. This can be evidenced in the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Joint Commissioning Strategy which identified a new SEMH approach as a major objective. This strategy is now part of the Children and Young People's Plan and the SEMH strategy is part of the SEND Strategic approach with related targets on the Corporate Plan, CAMHS Transformation Plan and CYPS Improvement Plan regarding addressing exclusions.

## **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 6.1 The new lease needs to be in place as soon as possible, certainly for the new financial year in April 2017, to allow the Rowan Management Group (i.e. Governing Body) to appropriately plan the use of finances to permanently employ staff and resource the building. These costs will be met from within the Rowan Centre place funding budget that comes from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. This will enable the Rowan Centre to continue to improve the response to the needs and provision for SEMH needs of the vulnerable young people.

## **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 7.1 There will be no cost to the Council's revenue budget or the Dedicated Schools Grant from the proposal to grant The Rowan Centre a lease for the Woodland Room.
- 7.2 The Rowan Centre is able to fund the lease in 2016/17 from its own budget. The Rowan Centre budget is calculated on the number of assigned pupil places per financial year and the future cost of the lease and further running costs will be met from within their future budget allocations.
- 7.3 Monkwood Academy is part of the Sandhill Academy Trust. The Sandhill Academy Trust will be re-brokered to form part of the Wickersley Partnership Trust (WPT) from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016. Negotiations for the Woodland Room lease will be with WPT. Initial discussions on the lease have taken place with WPT. Please see Appendix 1 – EXEMPT.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to deliver appropriate provision for children who have been permanently excluded from school and those that have Education, Health and Care plans for SEMH needs. The proposed new arrangements will continue to ensure that statutory requirements are met in a suitable and aspirational environment.

- 8.2 The Department for Education (DfE) guidance (April 2016) on making prescribed alterations to maintained schools, does not specifically apply to pupil referral units. However, the guidance makes it clear that the Council must nevertheless adhere to the usual principles of public law by acting rationally and following a fair procedure. The DfE expects the Council will ensure there is open and fair consultation with parents and other interested parties and to provide them with sufficient opportunity to give their views, before a final decision is made on the proposed changes.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

- 9.1 Existing Rowan Centre staff will use both the Rowan Centre and the Woodland Room. Should further staff be required to meet increasing numbers, they will be recruited as needed as part of usual practice and funded through the Rowan Centre place funding budget.

## **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 10.1 The lease will result in an improved offer to some of Rotherham's children and young people who have the highest level of SEND need and those which are also vulnerable young people and will help to achieve the SEMH strategy of '5 Steps to Collective Responsibility'.

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

- 11.1 The proposed lease would assist the Rowan Centre and the Council in complying with the duties owed to young people with SEN and SEMH needs in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014.

## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

- 12.1 The Children and Young People Service and Legal Services will be involved in the negotiation and execution of any agreed lease for the Woodland Room.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 There are increasing numbers of young people in Rotherham with SEMH needs. The current provision within the borough is not meeting this rise in numbers and there is more money being spent providing education outside Rotherham. Providing earlier intervention, closer to home for Rotherham's young people provides a more personalised approach and should reduce the need for placements outside the authority. If provision is not developed to meet needs within Rotherham, as the population grows, it is likely, so will the numbers and costs of out of authority placements.

## **14. Accountable Officers**

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Approvals obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services: - Jonathan Baggaley, Finance Manager, Regeneration and Environment and Capital and Vera Njelic, Principal Finance Officer and Mark Chambers, Head of CYPS Finance.

Director of Legal Services: - Neil Concannon, Service Manager, Litigation and Social Care, Legal Services.

Assistant Chief Executive – Helen Rowe, Senior Officer, Schools, Academies and Lifelong Learning HR Team.

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):- Not applicable.

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