

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	23 rd March 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Huw Hilditch-Roberts/ Rhian Morrle
Report author	Joe Griffiths, Modernising Education Officer
Title	Sub Regional Children's Residential Assessment Centre – Project Update

1. What is the report about?

The report provides an update on the progress of the Sub Regional Children's Residential Assessment Unit (CRAU).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide an update on the progress of the Sub Regional Children's Residential Assessment Unit (CRAU).
- 2.2. A decision is required on the sign off of the Partnership Financial Deed to allow the contract for the construction of the CRAU development to be awarded.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Cabinet approve the sign off of the Partnership Financial Deed to allow the contract for the construction of the CRAU development to be awarded.
- 3.2. That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 1) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

Background

- 4.1. Denbighshire County Council (DCC), Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board BCU are working in partnership on a scheme to develop a Regional Children's Residential Assessment Unit (CRAU) which will be located in Conwy, with CCBC as the Lead Partner.
- 4.2. The project will provide 3 purpose built buildings including an assessment unit along with a pre-planned and unplanned residential accommodation block for up to 6 children and young people for a maximum length of 12 weeks.
- 4.3. The project board have proposed that the name of the new CRAU building should be Bwthyn y Ddôl which is the Welsh translation of current site name Meadow Lodge. The name will now be consideration taken to CCBC Cabinet for approval as lead partner.
- 4.4. Planning for the build was secured by CCBC in November 2020
- 4.5. The build is to be fully funded with WG (Welsh Government) ICF (Integrated Care Fund). The cost of the build is £2,687,524 and ICF grant is available for Financial Years 2020/21 and 2021/22.
- 4.6. The tender to procure a construction contractor has been undertaken by CCBC via the North Wales Construction Partnership (NWCP) Framework. The tender evaluation has been conducted, and the contract will be awarded subject to sign off of the Funding Deed by CCBC and DCC (Appendix 2).
- 4.7. It is envisaged that construction on site will commence in spring 2021, with the construction expected to be completed in spring 2022.
- 4.8. The proposal is to agree the sign off of the Funding Deed to allow CCBC to appoint the construction contract to the winning contractor to allow them to commence works on the build of the CARU.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 The proposal meets corporate plan priorities to support children, young people and their families.

6 What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 The Capital costs for the project are currently estimated at £2.687m. A business case was approved by Denbighshire's Strategic Investment Group 16th February 2021 (Appendix 3).

6.2 Confirmation of the revenue costs will be formalised as part of a separate Collaboration and Partnership Agreement. Children's Services are experiencing year on year financial pressures due to the numbers and complexity of placements, it is unlikely that the service will be able to fund the additional revenue costs from within existing budgets. In effect the project, if successful, is likely to reduce ongoing pressures in this area.

7 What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1 A well-being Impact Assessment has been undertaken (Appendix 1). The Assessment was undertaken with input from officers in Education, and Children's Services, CCBC and BCUHB and scored 3 out of 4 stars. Overall, the project will have a positive impact. The document has assessed the project and some of the elements, as the project is based in Conwy, will not impact directly on Denbighshire. However its impact on the region / area has been considered in drawing up the assessment.

8 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1.1 CCBC as the lead partner have undertaken engagement with support from DCC to engage with partners/stakeholders a list of these partners can be found in Appendix 4.

- 8.1.2 The Project reports to a Project Board consisting of the CCBC Cabinet Member for Children and Family Social Care and DCC Lead Member for Education, Children Services and Public Engagement and scrutiny representation.
- 8.1.3 Overall feedback for the development has been positive, and the feedback has influenced the design and layout of the build.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 The decision to proceed with the Sub Regional Children's Residential Assessment Unit capital project led by Conwy has been discussed and approved by the Strategic Investment Group. The capital element represents minimal risk and is grant funded and led by Conwy County Council. It is noted that the agreement states that "Following completion of the Works Contract, the Parties acknowledge that the operation of the Centre shall be subject to separate funding and governance arrangements ... which the Parties agree to put in place as soon as reasonably practicable". This is welcomed however it is important that DCC Finance are included in those discussions at the earliest opportunity in order to ensure that any ongoing revenue financial impact can be assessed.

10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1 Consultants costs already incurred on the development bringing the development to the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 3 would be lost if the development is not able to go ahead. WG may question the Council's approach.
- 10.2 Currently there is no such facility in North Wales and Social Care are forced to make emergency placements wherever there is a vacancy, which is expensive and often out of county.
- 10.3 Children's Services will need to secure revenue funding for ongoing staffing, maintenance and dilapidation costs and fund officer time to managing the

building, grounds and internal services. Confirmation of these costs will be formalised as part of a separate Collaboration and Partnership Agreement.

10.4 There is the risk that NRW will only permit heavy machinery, piling or digging on the site during Badger non-breeding season of July to November which could put the WG ICF grant in jeopardy. An application to acquire a badger license from NRW is currently being drafted to be submitted to NRW once a contractor has been appointed and there is a construction method statement provided.

11 Power to make the decision

11.1 Cabinet is required to authorise the commencement of this procurement procedure pursuant to section 2.7.2 iii of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

11.2 Local Government Act 2000 S.2 the power to enter into arrangements that facilitate and are conducive to environmental, economic and social well-being.

11.3 The Local Government Wales Measure 2009 S12 (2) in respect of collaboration duties.

11.4 The proposal is consistent with the premise of the Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014 in its focus on ensuring early intervention and prevention to avoid high levels of dependency and costs.

11.5 The Council also has power to enter into contracts pursuant to section 111 Local Government Act 1972 (power to undertake any act to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions); section 135 Local Government Act 1972 (power to make standing orders to govern entering into contracts), section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (appoint such officers as they think necessary for the proper discharge by the authority of the authority's functions); section 3(1) Local Government Act 1999 (general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised).