



**Meeting:** Full Council

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**Wards Affected:** Preston

**Report Title:** Relocation of Torbay School & a new Primary School in Paignton

**Is the decision a key decision?** Yes

**When does the decision need to be implemented?**

**Executive Lead Contact Details:** Cllr Julien Parrott, Executive Lead for Adults and Children, Tel. 207113, [julien.parrott@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:julien.parrott@torbay.gov.uk),

**Supporting Officer Contact Details:** Richard Williams, Director of Children's Services, Tel. 208949, [richard.williams@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:richard.williams@torbay.gov.uk)

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## **1. Proposal and Introduction**

- 1.1 On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 members agreed to relocate Torbay School from its current location at Torquay Road, Paignton TQ3 2AL to a new site which would better meet the needs of the young people attending this special school.
- 1.2 When the report was submitted last February the preferred option was to relocate Torbay School to the site of the school's outreach unit at Hillside, South Parks Road, Torquay. However, further site investigations confirm that this site is not viable; with limited funding the onsite issues made the scheme unaffordable and it was evident that the amount of usable space would be too small for the needs of the school.
- 1.3 Children Services has been looking at alternative sites for the school to relocate to and these investigations have identified the site at MyPlace, Paignton as a suitable option.
- 1.4 In 2013 the Council agreed to lease the MyPlace site to the Youth Trust for the delivery of Torbay's youth programme. This lease has not yet been finalised and Officers are now asking members to review this decision and agree that the site can be utilised to accommodate Torbay School and will need to include elements of youth provision.
- 1.5 The Youth Trust will need to develop a new business plan to maximise the use of available space at the MyPlace centre, utilise other potential opportunities on the full Parkfield site and throughout Torbay to the benefit of Children and Young People.
- 1.6 The relocation of Torbay school will leave a vacant site near the centre of Paignton with purpose built school accommodation. Historically, there has always been a

high demand for places in this area of Paignton and whilst Children's Services recent programme of expansions has ensured that the Council as the Local Authority (LA) has met its statutory duty, the tight capacity in Paignton and Torquay presents problems for the LA when placing children moving into the area mid year.

- 1.7 The vacant site would provide Children Services with the opportunity to open a new primary school in Paignton. The new school would help ease capacity issues in both Paignton and Torquay and ensure that the LA can respond to in year migration, parental preference and any new growth for the foreseeable future. The Department for Education (DfE) is also encouraging Torbay to consider opening a new school at this time.

## **2 Reason for Proposal**

- 2.1 The Council recognises and has agreed that Torbay School needs to be relocated. However, with limited capital funding Children Services needs to ensure that a viable solution is found which meets the school's needs with an affordable option. The Council owns the MyPlace site which is of sufficient size to accommodate a school; and the existing facilities would benefit the young people who attend Torbay School.
- 2.2 At present there are no alternatives and, if the school remains in situ, it will continue to face ongoing issues which will have a negative impact on outcomes for children.
- 2.3 If Torbay School does not relocate, the LA loses the opportunity to open a new primary school in the centre of Paignton.
- 2.4 Children's Services acknowledges that this proposal has challenged the existing Youth Trustees and is seeking to reframe its partnership with the Trustees through a new business plan.
- 2.5 Children Services would work in partnership with the school and the Youth Trust to ensure that the MyPlace site meets the needs of both services – to support young people.
- 2.6 Pending agreement by the Youth Trust, it would be advantageous if the school would have use of the site during the school hours and the Youth Trust would have use in the evenings, weekends and during holiday periods. In addition to this, other potential users of the wider Parkfield site (BMX Track) would be unaffected by these proposals.
- 2.7 Enabling both services to use the MyPlace facility would support positive outcomes for children and young people providing an exciting opportunity for partnership working.

## **3 Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision**

- 3.1 That, subject to the outcome of the formal consultation in 3.3 below and in the event of a decision being made to relocate Torbay School to the MyPlace facility in Paignton, the decision in Minute 172(ii) 'that the Executive Head of Commercial Services be given delegated authority to agree the terms of the lease and/or

procurement arrangements for the transfer of the Parkfield site (the new build), BMX and Skateboard Park to the Torbay Youth Trust' be rescinded.

- 3.2 That the Director of Children's Services be requested to work in partnership with the Youth Trust to develop an alternative business plan, to be in place by July 2016, within existing Children's Services resources.
- 3.3 That, following the outcome of the formal consultation, the decision to relocate Torbay School to the MyPlace facility in Paignton and the subsequent transfer of the area of land edged red on the plan attached as Appendix 2 of the submitted report on a 125 year lease be delegated to the Executive Director for Operations and Finance and Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Lead for Adults and Children.
- 3.4 That in the event that a decision is made to transfer Torbay School to the MyPlace facility, the Executive Director for Operations and Finance and Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Lead for Adults and Children be given delegated authority to develop the current Torbay School site at Torquay Road as a new primary school.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Supporting Information and Impact Assessment

Appendix 2: Plan showing land to be transferred to Children Services

## **Background Documents**

Council Report & Decision Review of School Places 26/2/15

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=370>