
EASTBOURNE SCHOOL

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Chris McEwan
Efficiency and Resources Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services
Richard Alty , Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider a request by Teesside University to use Eastbourne School on a temporary basis, pending the development of their proposed new facility at Central Park.
2. To seek authority for the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Efficiency and Resources Portfolio, to agree terms and conclude a short term letting of the school.

Summary

3. Teesside University have recently approached the Council to enquire about the availability of Eastbourne School as a temporary location from which the University could offer and deliver short courses in Darlington from autumn 2009.
4. The proposed development by the University at Central Park adjacent to Darlington College is expected to be completed by September 2011 but in the interim, the University would like to begin to offer courses with a view to building up its customer base in Darlington earlier than would otherwise be possible.
5. Eastbourne School shown on the **attached plan** is currently occupied by the Academy who have now served formal notice on the Council of their intention to terminate their lease on the 28 August 2009.
6. The Academy are beginning to transfer to the new Academy building at Hundens Park and will have vacated Eastbourne School by 28 August.
7. Pursuant to the decision by Cabinet in June (Min C8(3)/Jun/09 refers) plans for the early demolition of the school site are progressing and the demolition contract is in the process of being tendered.

8. However, it is felt that a short term use of the school by the University could be accommodated without having a detrimental impact on the decision to demolish and given the circumstances is considered a good outcome for the Council through the revenue saving on the deferment of the demolition cost and in time if market conditions improve, it may be possible to place demolition obligations on a developer. Payment would be made by the University for use of the building.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that :-
- (a) The proposed short term use of Eastbourne School by Teesside University from September 2009 be approved, subject to the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Efficiency and Resources Portfolio, being satisfied with the University's arrangements for security of the buildings and site.
 - (b) The Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Efficiency and Resources Portfolio, be authorised to agree terms in line with those in the **Appendix** to this report to be considered in Part III of the agenda.
 - (c) The Borough Solicitor be authorised to conclude the legal documentation accordingly.

Reasons

10. To assist Teesside University in offering courses in Darlington prior to completion of a new University facility at Central Park.

Paul Wildsmith
Director of Corporate Services

Richard Alty
Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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PB

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has implications for Crime & Disorder if the building remains empty following vacation. Paragraph 17 refers to security arrangements.
Health and Well Being	There are no issues relating to Health & Wellbeing which this report needs to address.
Sustainability	There are no issues relating to Sustainability which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to Diversity which this report needs to address.
Wards Affected	Lingfield.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Paragraph 14 explains why this proposal supports the Perfectly Placed priority and the Prosperous and Aspiring Darlington themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Efficiency	The University would be responsible for the security and upkeep of the school buildings during their occupation, thereby removing the Councils' obligation. Demolition of the school could then be arranged to coincide with the University's subsequent vacation. The proposal will save the Council money, through deferring demolition costs and through the payment from the University.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

11. Eastbourne School is due to be vacated by the Academy at the end of August 2009 and pursuant to the decision of Cabinet in June, the school was scheduled to be demolished at the earliest opportunity.
12. Teesside University have now approached the Council to enquire whether the school could be made available for use by the University for a 2 year period until their proposed new facility at Central Park is ready for occupation in September 2011.
13. The University is very keen to build student numbers in Darlington over the two years from autumn 2009 to autumn 2011. This will enable the new building for the University Centre in Darlington to open with good occupation, helping its business case. It is also helpful to the University to provide courses and increase student numbers in the interim.
14. The proposal is also beneficial to Darlington because it brings additional higher education courses to Darlington two years earlier than would otherwise be possible. The creation of a University Centre in Darlington plays an important part in helping to raise skill levels, aspirations and participation in higher education in the Borough, all of which are important objectives of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.
15. The University has examined a range of options for creating this temporary University Centre in Darlington and no other option could match its requirements. In addition, the Eastbourne School building provides flexibility for the University to respond to student demand. The University will undertake some works to the building to ensure that the premises provide an appropriate University experience for students.
16. The University do not expect to require the school beyond September 2011 and as such it is proposed that the lease is only for a period of 2 years and also excluded from Part II of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954, thereby ensuring the University are not granted security of tenure (see Appendix).
17. Although the school is considerably bigger than the University require, they are prepared, subject to terms being agreed, to take over responsibility for the whole of the school, including the security of the grounds and of all the buildings (used and unused). The University is currently examining security options, and it is recommended that their use of the building is conditional on satisfactory security arrangements being agreed.
18. The University have yet to determine the number of courses they anticipate offering in Darlington but in the short term, depending on the level of uptake for courses, they do see their requirement for space at the school increasing.
19. Access to the school and car parking on site are a concern to both the University and the Council and both are keen to ensure that the impact on local residents is minimised.

20. There is already provision for parking at the front of the school with access off The Fairway. At the rear of the school, hardstanding areas could be used as car parking with access gained off Bourne Avenue through the Council's Eastbourne Sports Complex.
21. In terms of planning, the proposal to use the school as a University Centre and the proposal to use the rear areas of the school for car parking does not constitute a change of use and as such would not require planning permission. However, a Traffic Assessment has been requested and is to be undertaken prior to occupation, the cost of which the University have agreed to pay (circa £7,500).
22. Clearly, there are concerns about students parking in the surrounding streets and at the Sports complex. The University have agreed that they would not be charging for students to park at Eastbourne and providing sufficient parking capacity can be made available on site, then the need to park off site should be avoided.
23. The area shown hatched on the attached plan is currently intended to be excluded from the lease to the University, but its use for additional car parking may need to be considered dependant on the findings and recommendations of the Traffic Assessment.
24. At the end of the proposed occupation by the University, the school would revert to the Council and could then be demolished if indeed this was still considered to be the Council's preferred course of action.
25. The detail terms proposed are set out in an Appendix. The University will be making payment to the Council for use of the buildings.
26. In addition, the anticipated revenue savings from deferment of the demolition contract by 2 years is £43,600.

Outcome of Consultation

27. Subject to approval by Cabinet it is proposed that local residents be informed of the Council's decision.
28. Going forward, local residents will be consulted as part of any future planning application process.