

Petitions Committee

26 February 2016

Report title	Petition 150-15 - Save Warstones Resource Centre	
Wards affected	All	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Elias Mattu Adults	
Accountable director	Linda Sanders, People	
Originating service	Commissioning, Older People	
Accountable employee(s)	Paul Smith Tel Email	Head Of Commissioning - Older People 01902 555318 Paul.Smith@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be considered by	N/A	

Recommendation for decision:

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the issues raised in the petition to save Warstones Resource Centre.
2. Support the plans to handover the Warstones office at the end of February 2016 to Corporate Landlord.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 In November 2015 a petition containing 852 signatures was submitted to the City of Wolverhampton Council. The petition totally opposes the closure of Warstones Resource Centre.

2.0 Details of the Petition

2.1 A petition was received on the 25 November 2015 from Mr William Baugh, tutor of one of the community groups located at Warstones. The petition, containing 852 signatures from residents of the City, is totally opposed to the closure of Warstones Resource Centre.

2.2 The petition states that:

'Keep the Warstones Resource Centre Open'

We as Council Tax Payers to Wolverhampton City Council are totally opposed to the closure of Warstones Resource Centre. The Centre is the only centre of its kind in the West of the City. All the other areas, i.e. Bilston, Wednesfield & Whitmore Reans are well provided with such facilities. Despite the Fact that they contrie far less money by Council Tax. Warstones Resource Centre should remain available to the local Community .So, why not the west side of the City.

3.0 Background

3.1 As part of a wider transformation process, in February 2013 Cabinet approved the decommissioning of Warstones Resource Centre and the relocation of the bed based services to existing in-house services for older people.

3.2 In January 2014, Cabinet approved the continuation of formal negotiations with the Clinical Commissioning Group. This option proved to not be viable.

3.3 The Warstones location is currently the office base for the following teams/groups :

- Adult Care Team West
- Six community groups
- External organisations

3.4 The move of the Warstones Office Base (completion of 2013/14 savings proposal) was included within the savings proposals that were submitted to Cabinet on 21st October 2015 as part of the Draft Budget 2016/17 report.

3.5 The facility suffers from significant obsolescence and disrepair which renders the building surplus to any future uses associated with the new service model and future reuse.

3.6 The maintenance backlog for Warstones office is £514,000 which has been derived at through the condition survey process and work is required within 5 years to ensure the building is compliant and fit for purpose.

4.0 Relocation Plans

4.1 In late 2015 Asset Management, Corporate Landlord undertook an options appraisal to identify suitable alternative accommodation for the following services that are currently based at Warstones office:

- Adult Care Team West – 19 staff
- Older Peoples Management Team – 6 staff

4.2 On 11 November 2015 and 18 November 2015 respectively, Future Space Programme Board (FSPB) and Corporate Landlord Board (CLB) agreed for the Adult Care Team West to relocate to Alfred Squire Road and for Older Peoples Management Team to relocate to the Civic Centre. Both of these relocations are due to be completed by the end of February 2016.

4.3 Community activity groups are currently being supported by the Head of Libraries and Community to identify an appropriate locality should they wish to continue. One of the groups has discontinued. The group below is still to be relocated and continued discussions are being undertaken:

Painting Club – held twice a week with an average attendance of 10-15 attendees per week. The following options have been explored:

- St Chads (declined)
- Bradmore Community Centre (no availability)
- Warstones Library (unsuitable)

4.4 The external organisation based at Warstones have identified an alternative location and will move out by 19 February 2016.

4.5 The aim is to handover the Warstones office at the end of February 2016 to Corporate Landlord.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 The subject of this petition is linked to a savings proposal included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy to 'Move Warstones Office Base Completion of 2013/14 Savings Proposal' with a target of £35,000. This proposal was approved for further development as part of the Draft Budget 2016/17 report approved by Cabinet on 21 October 2015.

[AS/15022016/U]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the petition.

[RB/12022016/Y]

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The staff are being relocated to appropriate alternative service locations (Alfred Squire Road and Civic Centre) and the community groups are being supported to find alternative venues should they wish to continue.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no human resource implications associated with this report. Staff are being relocated to appropriate alternative service locations.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 Corporate landlord is actively involved in the assessment of the asset implications relating to the service in this report.

10.2 Proceeding with the relocation of staff and community groups and closure of this building will enable release of an asset for disposal.

10.3 The Head of Libraries and Community is supporting the community groups to identify alternative venues.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 Draft Budget 2016/17, Cabinet 21 October 2015.