
Subject: RENOVATION OF FORMER HAIR SALON TO PROVIDE EXTENDED FACILITIES FOR CROSSLINKS YOUTH & COMMUNITY HUB AT 9 SHERIDAN ROAD, DOVER

Meeting and Date: Cabinet – 8 April 2024

Report of: David Parish, Head of Property Assets

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Charlotte Zosseder, Portfolio Holder for Community and Corporate Property

Decision Type: Non-Key Decision

Classification: Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To update Cabinet on progress with the project to undertake works to the shops at Nos 9 and 13 Sheridan Road, Dover to support the work of the Crosslinks Community Hub and seek approval for the proposed concessionary rent arrangements.

Recommendation:

- (a) To note that tenders have been sought for the works involved and that the Strategic Director (Place and Environment) will shortly be awarding the contract for the refurbishment work to the premises following review of the tenders.
- (b) To approve a Grant of Concessionary Rental to Crosslinks Community Hub in the sum of £4,650 per annum in respect of the rent for 13 Sheridan Road.
- (c) To approve an increase in the Grant to Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub in respect of the rent for 9 Sheridan Road from £3,250 to £4,350 per annum.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report updates Cabinet on the current situation regarding units 9 and 13 Sheridan Road, with authorisation shortly being granted by the Strategic Director (Place and Environment) to award the main works contract, approve a grant increase to number 9 and a new grant to number 13 as detailed. These works will provide a larger facility for Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub who already occupy 9 Sheridan Road. The works will benefit the wider community by increasing activities and training available, create a more attractive shopfront, improve visual amenity, help reduce vandalism and stop the building falling into further disrepair.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 At Cabinet on 6 November 2023 (CAB 44) it was agreed:

- (a) That the use of £80,000 from the Special Reserve Fund for Corporate Assets Repairs and Maintenance for works at 9 and 13 Sheridan Road be approved.
- (b) That the transfer of two disused housing stores adjoining 13 Sheridan Road for use by the Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub be approved.
- (c) That the grant of a lease for 13 Sheridan Road to Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub for a 5-year term, and the early renewal of the lease for 9 Sheridan Road to Crosslinks Community Hub, to align with the above term, be approved.
- (d) That the Strategic Director (Place and Environment) be authorised to agree the terms of the leases.

2.2 The recent rent review of 9 has concluded that the current rent is lower than market value and therefore will need to be increased to £4,350 (an additional annual sum of £1,100) on renewal of the lease. Approval was given by Cabinet at the meeting on 4 March 24 (CAB 84) to award Cross Links a Grant of Concessionary Rental for the sum of £3,250 for 9 Sheridan Road but we are seeking approval for the increase in grant funding to £4,350 in order to cover the revised rent.

2.3 The review for the Heads of Terms for 13 Sheridan Road concluded the market rental value is £4,650 and we are seeking grant funding to the same amount.

2.4 In respect of 2.2 and 2.3 the Council's Principal Valuer confirms the rents represent the best consideration reasonably obtainable.

2.5 Tenders have been sought to carry out the refurbishment works and are expected to come back in the region of £130,000; this figure will be updated when the tender evaluations are complete.

3. Identification of Options

3.1 Option 1: To proceed and deliver all aspects of the works detailed in this report

3.2 Option 2: Not to proceed with the works and leave the shop unit vacant.

4. Evaluation of Options

4.1 Option 1 is the recommended option. The Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub is a key asset in the Buckland ward as well as the Dover District with youth groups in general; therefore, the proposed renovation to both shops will enhance youth facilities and benefit the community by providing additional training and core skills within a working environment.

4.2 Option 2 – Is not the recommended option as it fails to take advantage of a good opportunity to enhance communal facilities within the Buckland area. Without the use of the additional building, it would limit what the Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub can provide and the extra services that the community are in desperate need of.

4.3 The vacant commercial unit at 13 Sheridan Road would remain untenanted and at risk of future vandalism, fly tipping and general disrepair with no other tenancy interest at the time of this report.

We have also received a letter from planning regarding the present state of the frontage to number 13 with a possible improvement notice being served.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 The new lease following the renovation of 13 Sheridan Road would result in a vacant facility being taken on and reduce the liability to the Council.
- 5.2 The proposed expenditure for the overall refurbishment project is £130,000 with the funding coming from various sources as below:
- £80,000 from the Special Reserve Fund for which approval was given by Cabinet at the meeting on 6.11.23 (CAB 44 6.11.23); to carry out refurbishment works at 9 and 13 Sheridan Road to extend the existing Crosslinks Youth & Community Hub across units 9 and 13 Sheridan Road.
 - £25,000 funding (as reported at CAB 44 6.11.23) from Crosslinks to carry out refurbishment works to 9 Sheridan Road in conjunction with the refurbishment of 13 Sheridan Road. This funding is to be invoiced to Crosslinks on award of the main works contract.
 - £5,000 from the insurance claim for vehicle damage to the rear wall of 13 Sheridan Road (as reported at CAB 44 6.11.23).
 - £20,000 from the HRA budget for the urgent works required to the walkway serving the Council owned dwellings above 9 and 13 Sheridan Road. These urgent works are required to stop continued water ingress into the newly refurbished commercial units.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 6.2 Where possible long lasting or recyclable materials will be explored for work, thus contributing to the Council's Climate Change objectives including appropriate insulation to the new roofing system on the rear courtyards, new LED lights to replace existing system and double glazing to the new shop fronts for increased energy efficiency measures.
- 6.3 The Council will continue to work with Crosslinks Community Centre to find suitable solutions for Low carbon heating system.

7. Corporate Implications

- 7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Members are reminded that the Council's revenue and capital resources are under pressure and so they will wish to assure themselves that all proposals progress the Council's priorities, are the best option available and will deliver value for money (AC)
- 7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.
- 7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report seeking approval to award the Sheridan Road shop refurbishment contract, approve a grant increase to number 9 and a new grant to number 13, does not specifically highlight any equality implications. In discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>
- 7.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

8. Appendices

None.

Background Papers

Relevant papers on Property Services file – Sheridan Road Shops, Crosslinks

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