



Borough of Poole

Outline Business Case

Oakdale Learning Centre

Version:
Date Of Issue:
Author:

V8.0
December 2018
Cally Barnes

1. DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

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Name	Job Title / Role	Action Required
Cally Barnes	Project Manager	

2. DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Amended By	Summary Of Change
v1.0	18.10.2018	Cally Barnes	First draft submitted to project team for review
v2.0	23.10.2018	Cally Barnes	Second draft for project team to review
v3.0	26.10.2018	Cally Barnes	Amends following review
v4.0	30.10.2018	Cally Barnes	Amends following first draft discussion
v5.0	07.11.2018	Cally Barnes	Amends following discussion with SRO
v6.0	08.11.2018	Cally Barnes	Amends made following covering report discussion
v7.0	10.12.2018	Cally Barnes	Sections amended to reflect decision of covering report
v8.0	21.12.2018	Cally Barnes	Appendix references removed

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DEFINITIONS

HORSA	Hutting Operation for the Raising of the School-Leaving Age
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
ORCA	Oakdale Residents Community Association
OJEU	Official Journal of European Union
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
LGR	Local Government Reorganisation

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1. Purpose

The preparation of an Outline Business Case was approved in March 2018 to determine the feasibility of building a new learning centre, and housing on two adjacent sites in Oakdale. Currently the larger (site 1) adjoins the A35 Blandford Road and contains the current learning centre, and the smaller (site 2) contains temporary classrooms and car parking, used to support delivery of the service in the learning centre. Together they have a gross developable area of 0.78 Ha.



3.2. Background

Skills and Learning is the largest adult and community learning provider in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. It is managed by the Borough of Poole within the Culture and Community Service unit. The service headquarters are at Oakdale; the busiest of 7 main locations for the delivery of the service across Dorset. The service supports the delivery of the Council's priorities for economic development, community, and residents health and well-being, and it is currently provided at nil cost to the council.

The current learning centre is located on site 1, with the service also being provided through the use of porta cabins (in blue) on site 2, and a HORSAs building as storage (yellow), site 2.

ORCA also currently use some areas of the current learning centre, but the Borough of Poole do not have a legal obligation to provide space for them going forward.

3.3. The Needs and Issues

Oakdale Learning Centre Condition

The HORSAs building is being used for storage only, due to lack of space within the main centre. Property services have advised that the HORSAs building needs to be demolished as soon as possible – it has asbestos in the roof which has become displaced following previous strong winds, and it cannot be refurbished due to the asbestos. The porta cabins are beyond life expectancy and were only provided as a temporary measure in 2009. These only have an estimated two year life span left. The learning centre itself is not fit for purpose and is overdue essential maintenance which currently equates to £485k of immediate works required, and an additional £300k over the next 20 years. These are purely essential maintenance costs, and do not achieve a refurbishment of the centre, which is what the centre needs. If nothing is done bar essential maintenance of the learning centre, the service will lose space of around 322sqm through the loss of the HORSAs building and porta cabins.

Housing

The Borough has requirements relating to the housing need which are currently being considered as part of the proposed Local Plan. Site 1 is considered suitable for housing development alongside retention of the learning centre. The emerging Poole Local Plan proposes to allocate the sites for a mixed use development comprising new learning centre and housing. Housing options are therefore being considered alongside the need for a new learning centre.

Continuity of Service Provision

Any interruption to the service from building failure would create an urgent situation with high reputational and cost impacts. Any break to the service provision for construction would impact adversely on current learners and opportunities for future skills development and create a risk to the continued provision of some or all of the funding from the ESFA. If the essential maintenance of the learning centre is achieved but no replacement of the space used through the HORSAs and porta cabins, then learning activity and current funding available through ESFA will be reduced indefinitely.

The risk of doing nothing

The risk of doing nothing must also be considered with the following possible consequences: large sums of money are continued to be spent on the learning centre in trying to keep it in working order, however the prediction is that the building is on an unknown timescale before it is declared unsafe, and the service will cease to operate due to no alternative options to deliver the service identified.

3.4. Indicative Programme

An indicative programme based on option 1 has been completed.

3.5. Decisions Required

Following completion of the Outline Business Case and the funding gap exhibited, approval is sought to conduct a Full Business Case with the aim of reducing the funding gap on the preferred option (using the current Oakdale site 2).

3.6. Risks and Mitigations

The project will maintain a full risk register with clear ownership for actions to mitigate those risks.

3.7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The options appraisal and subsequent Outline Business Case detail the feasibility of building a new learning centre on site 2, and housing on site 1. Through the initial feasibility study, a funding gap was identified. This caused the project team to look into alternative options, and an alternative option 2 is detailed throughout the Outline Business Case. Option 2 involves refurbishment of the current learning centre and removing the HORSAs and porta cabins, and building housing on site 2. Both options still pose a funding gap, although the gap has been reduced in option 2. Further feasibility on option 1 could potentially reduce the funding gap through: modifying the learning centre design, determining additional/alternative funding options, modifying the housing design, and reducing cost for associated infrastructure.

4. BACKGROUND

Skills and Learning is the largest adult and community learning provider in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. It is managed by the Borough of Poole within the Culture and Community Service unit. It provides training and learning opportunities for over 5600 learners and 130 local employers to improve the skills, employability and well-being of our local communities. <http://www.skillsandlearningbdp.co.uk/>
The service operates from over 60 sites across Dorset, with 7 main locations and Oakdale being the busiest of these.

The service provides accredited and non-accredited programmes in English, Maths, ICT, Employability, Business Administration, Health & Social Care, Customer Service, Management, Bookkeeping, Counselling, Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools, Teacher Training, Personal & Professional Development GCSEs, Languages, Hair, Beauty & Therapies, Arts & Crafts, community learning & engagement. 'Train & Grow' programmes – (CPD and mandatory trainings), E-learning, Apprenticeships and Traineeships, 'Ready 4 Work' programmes, 'Living Well' (mental health recovery workshops), community engagement programmes & projects, Services to Business, 20+ Job Clubs across Dorset.

Quality Assurance: Ofsted (Grade 2, 2017), Matrix Accredited (2017) for Information, Advice and Guidance. Approved centre for 11 awarding organisations including C&G, OCR, AQA, NCFE, ILM.

Skills and Learning has a budget of £4.5m for the academic year 2017/18. £4.1m is generated from ESFA grants and the remainder from learner and employer fees. The service operates at nil cost to the council and pays the council for support services and use of the Oakdale site.

Oakdale is the service headquarters and is a very well used learning location critical to the performance of the service. The buildings are considered inadequate to the needs of a modern learning service with no scope to develop additional services.

The ORCA is a small volunteer run membership based community group who occupy an office, storage area and a part time community café (Acorns) within the main building. A peppercorn rent and small apportionment of service costs are paid by ORCA to skills and learning. ORCA has provided the ideal requirements for the new building to ensure they are able to carry out their function.

In addition to ORCA, the Centre hosts around 70/80 workforce development courses each year, delivered by the Borough's Social Care Learning & Development Team. The Service also works with the Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust who undertake client interviews for their PPED Steps 2 Wellbeing programme – these are delivered across 3 days a week using the Centre's interview room – and Ansbury who deliver Careers Advice to the unemployed.

5. THE NEEDS AND THE ISSUES

5.1. Needs

Learning Centre

The headquarters for skills and learning provision is at the learning centre, Oakdale. The current building is not fit for purpose and requires immediate refurbishment works which are now overdue, as advised by property services within the Borough of Poole. The HORSIA building is being used for storage but was previously also used for exams when there was no available space within the centre. As the building can only be used for storage now, this is causing an additional strain on space to deliver the service. There is asbestos within the roof and it has been deemed extremely dangerous and not fit for refurbishment, and should be demolished immediately. The porta cabins are also requiring maintenance, although these were initially installed as a temporary measure in 2009. The skills and learning provision is still widely used, and therefore the proposal for this project is to ensure the continuation of this service provision.

In planning for the future, the service recognises the need to adapt its services within a changing environment. It is responding to this challenge by offering distance/e-learning courses both wholly online or as a 'blended' mix along with face to face tuition, giving learners the opportunity for increased flexibility and choice. However, many subjects such as Beauty, Hairdressing, Counselling, Art & Craft and Employment Support courses require a classroom environment. In addition people with basic skills needs and disadvantaged groups (long term unemployed, mental health, learning disabilities) require human interaction in a classroom space. Skills & Learning are adept at encouraging the lowest qualified and those with learning disabilities or difficulties into learning and addressing social isolation. These individuals need face to face support within a learning centre and many require Learning Support staff working alongside them. Accordingly, whilst extending online courses, the service anticipates that over the long term this will not exceed 10-15% of their delivery. In contributing to the specification and design requirements, the

service will ensure a new centre is a flexible space that can be readily adapted to meet evolving technological and learning trends.

ORCA is holding over following the expiry of their lease meaning that there is no legal or statutory obligation to provide accommodation for them. Ward Members have requested that options are explored for retaining some flexible community meeting space in the replacement facility that might meet the needs of ORCA and other local groups.

Skills and Learning have consulted with ORCA to establish their needs. Both parties agreed on the principle of using shared spaces wherever feasible particularly the use of a larger space for well-being activities. ORCA's requirements have been considered when looking at the design of the new build, however in order to reduce costs and any funding gap for the project, ORCA's requirements will be in line with Skills and Learning, through the use of shared space.

Housing

The Borough has requirements relating to housing need which are currently being considered as part of the proposed Local Plan. The location of the sites is considered suitable for housing development alongside retention of the learning centre. The emerging Poole Local Plan thereby proposes to allocate site 1 for housing, and site 2 for the new learning centre. Housing options have therefore been considered along side the need for a new learning centre.

5.2. Issues

The following issues have to be considered in any proposal taken forward.

Learning Centre Condition

Currently there is no 'do nothing option'. The buildings are in such a dilapidated state that they are in urgent need of essential maintenance works in order to ensure the service is being provided in a safe environment. The HORSAs cabin is dangerous and needs to be demolished imminently, having been constructed in 1948 with an estimated 40-50 year life span. The porta cabins are also not fit for purpose, having only been added to the site in 2009 as a temporary measure, and with a life span of 10 years. The essential maintenance costs are subject to availability of replacement parts, and as the building is now 112 years old (constructed in 1906), there is increased risk the costs of these will accrue the longer the building is left to operate. The service is also operating at a nil cost to the council, and providing benefits to the council. If the building is not available for use/alternative provided, the service will have to cease.

Continuation of Service Provision

The ESFA methodology for grant funding Skills and Learning is paid on a formula funding model based on a monthly profile, matched with individual learners achieving qualifications and/or participation in class contact hours. A reduction or break in course delivery hours would result in an underpayment against the maximum grant value which has been assumed as part of the services annual budget. This would also be the case should there be any significant withdrawal of learners from courses as a result of disruption to courses caused by relocation, noise, interference.

Currently Beauty Therapies and Complementary Therapies courses and exams take place in the studios located on site 2. There is a risk of noise disturbance affecting this provision as a result of any building works on the site.

The avoidance of disruption to courses is paramount to achieving the grant payments of courses. Any plans would need to be developed around avoidance of disruption to class contact. A lower grant claim in one year would result in the grant(s) being rebased to a lower amount for the following year onwards.

Requirement for additional housing

The learning centre is located in the centre of a highly populated area where there is little land available for the development of additional housing. As the two sites are currently being under utilised, this provides a site within which the BoP can provide additional housing in a very sustainable location close to the town centre with good transport links.

The lack of funding to realise a solution

A funding gap for this project has been identified through the feasibility, and a potential resolution has been disclosed within the covering report.

The risk of doing nothing

There is no, 'do nothing option'. The buildings are in such a dilapidated state that they are in urgent need of essential maintenance works in order to ensure the service is being provided in a safe environment. The HORSAs cabin is dangerous and needs to be demolished imminently, and the porta cabins are also not fit for purpose. This causes a strain on the service due to reduced space to operate. The essential maintenance costs are subject to availability of replacement parts, and as the building is now 112 years old, there is increased risk the costs of these will accrue the longer the building is left to operate. The service is also operating at a nil cost to the council, and providing benefits to the council. If the building is not available for use/alternative provided, the service will have to cease.

6. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

The aspirations for the site at Oakdale is multi-faceted with the ambition to build a new learning centre whilst releasing land to achieve a corporate objective, relating to the development of housing that meets local needs.

6.1. Business Objectives

Skills and Learning Service

Skills & Learning offer courses in 7 main learning centres, of which Oakdale has the highest occupancy rate and learner numbers, and in community venues such as St Aldhelms School. The Oakdale Centre accommodates 13,000 programmed hours of courses in addition to 500 hours of ad hoc activity including exams, awarding body visits, meetings, CPD training, course break out rooms etc. There is 40 full time and part time core staff along with the ORCA service based in the centre. The Oakdale centre is the Skills and Learning customer service and business support headquarters accommodating: a main reception and café; 5 classrooms; 2 IT suites; 3 hairdressing & beauty studios; an art room and office space for desk-based staff. The centre has storage facilities for curriculum resources, finance and data, archives, IT equipment, art, craft and professional salon products.

The curriculum staff, facilities staff and customer services teams support the 100+ Teaching and Learning staff working in the centre delivering courses and exams and Information, Advice and Guidance from 9am -9pm Monday to Thursday, all day Friday and some weekends. This is in addition to classroom activity teaching and learning staff attend network meetings and annual mandatory training to meet Ofsted requirements. There is a high level of support and training associated with staff using IT equipment and operating the Virtual Learning Environment and managers monitor the quality of delivery through teaching observations, feedback and mentoring.

Learners can enrol on courses using on line, telephone or post channels however many people visit the centres to seek personal advice and guidance on their educational choices. As the service targets people with the greatest barriers to learning, including the unemployed, underrepresented groups and disadvantaged learners, the service receives daily referrals from JobCentre Plus, and other support agencies in the town.

The business objectives of this project are to ensure that this adult education service continues to be provided, in a fit for purpose building and in so doing enable the service to contribute towards government agendas of:

- Raising Productivity
- Tackling health & mental ill health
- Increasing Social Mobility
- Strengthening Community Cohesion
- Extending Working Lives
- Enhancing progression into well paid jobs
- Reducing unemployment and Inactivity

The scheme will support:

- 30% growth in adults retraining over 2 years
- 95% positive outcomes for learners: upskilling and increased productivity, improved leadership/management capacity, employment, promotion, progression into higher level courses eg Level 4 Management, work experience
- the development of minimum 60 (2/1 bed) housing units by 2021 creating construction jobs and apprenticeships
- a reduced carbon footprint and increased financial sustainability from fit for purpose and efficient retraining facility
- employers and the community access to a wide range of training and learning
- opportunities to improve skills, life chances and quality of life
- a gain for the local community through a welcoming and modern, Information hub and café, internet café, employer zone, careers advice and Job Club facility
- stakeholders (ORCA, Social Care Training Team, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust, Ansbury) retaining the ability to use rooms within the new centre
- increased local awareness of modern hairdressing and beauty facilities offering affordable services to local people
- the ability to support DLEP, Local Authority & Government priorities and an increase in Social Return on Investment

Housing

Alongside the business objectives of the adult education service provision, an opportunity to create much needed housing is realised, using the remaining site.

Poole (and East Dorset) have the smallest proportional housing growth since 2009, with around 2% increase in dwellings between 2009-2015. The skills shortage vacancies and hard to fill vacancies reported in Dorset (particularly Bournemouth & Poole) may reflect a lack of housing, as well as other factors. The projected growth in employment in three of the seven priority sectors identified by the LEP (care, retail & tourism - with lower wage rates, part-time/seasonal/temporary employment), will require housing that staff in these sectors can afford.

In support of the release of public sector land, the project has taken into account the emerging planning policy in the draft Poole Local Plan, which was endorsed for further consultation by Council. In the Draft Plan, the sites are identified as having potential for a mixed use development in PP9 site reference U9, incorporating 60 housing units. The emerging Poole Local Plan is based on the EASTERN Dorset Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015. This identifies need for 710dpa.

6.2. Success Criteria

The new learning centre gives opportunity for a 'rebrand' resulting in new business from learners/employers. The new facility would be a dynamic and vibrant modern campus able to support 30% growth in learner numbers compared with current figures. The proposed accommodation plan predicts the future required capacity

reducing the need for additional external room hire, decreasing the service costs for delivering courses. The new centre will increase current occupancy IRO 90%.

There would be a predicted increase in positive outcomes for learners through progression into further courses, employment, volunteering, independent living, community cohesion and reduction in social/community isolation. There would also be increase in staff morale resulting from the ability to work in a fully functioning, safe and welcoming work environment. Success criteria in terms of financial sustainability for the council would be achieved through reduced carbon footprint from a new building that can operate more sustainably.

The new build would also accommodate ORCA activities using shared space with Skills and Learning, removing pressures on other sites to accommodate ORCA. The service would also continue to achieve or exceed grant targets.

Further success includes the delivery of housing to reduce the number of people locally who are currently deemed to be in need of housing, such as the homeless.

6.3. Direct Benefits

- Local community retains access to a wide range of learning opportunities to improve their life chances, and quality of life.
- Stakeholders (ORCA, Social Care Training Team, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust, Ansbury) retain the ability to use rooms within the new centre.
- The local community gain a welcoming and modern café facility and information hub.
- There is an increase in local awareness of modern hairdressing and beauty facilities that offer affordable services to local people.
- The Borough retain the financial contribution from Skills & Learning of £366,000 pa for central support charges, and £122,000 for rent
- Increase in service ability to support DLEP, Local Authority & Government priorities.
- Growth in participation demonstrates an increase in Social Return on Investment.
- Using the second site to accommodate the learning centre, means land is released through section 77 application to the Secretary of State, thus enabling the delivery of housing for local people.
- More local people housed within their local community; reducing costs relating to temporary housing costs for local families.

6.4. Indirect Benefits

- Increased 'brand' awareness, promotional opportunities and public perception of higher quality services.
- Increased income from full cost courses recruiting as a result of being placed in a more professional and industry standard training venue that would appeal to employers and businesses.
- Improved prospect of achieving an Outstanding Ofsted outcome.

- Improved staff morale.
- Improved appearance of professionalism.
- New households may make use of a new adult resource centre including supporting any community outreach focused through the centre

7. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Background

During the initial stages of feasibility, a brief for the new learning centre was provided by Skills and Learning. The architect created high level designs, and the cost consultant indicative figures for the completion of the project based on this brief. These figures are inclusive of additional project costs such as external works, demolition and contingency. This, combined with the indicative funding figures provided by housing association, caused a funding gap.

It was decided then that alternative options for the two sites were to be considered in order to ensure that any possible way for reducing the funding gap was achieved. There was a plethora of different options looked into, and these were narrowed down to two, and an essential maintenance option for comparison.

- Option 1

Site 1	Site 2
60 housing units	New learning centre

- Option 2

Site 1	Site 2
Refurbishment of current building including new build	28 housing units

There are a number of issues that arise with the second option. Site 2 does not lend itself to a similar number of units; the approximate number of units at initial design is 28. This is due to the site being smaller, but it would also be subjected to stricter planning conditions with regards to storey height being limited to 2 storeys. Site 2 is not included for housing under the Local Plan. Option 2 does not provide a new learning centre, and instead refurbishes the existing. It does not achieve the transformational improvements in learning facilities described in 6, and therefore provides less benefit to the delivery of the councils economic development priority. It also does not include ORCA's requirements. During works on the learning centre for option 2, money would be spent on temporary classrooms to continue to delivery the service, on site 2. The money invested in temporary accommodation would not provide a benefit to the new learning centre. There is a risk to funding for both options should the service be affected through the works.

A summary of the options and their funding gaps are included within 10, and the full Options Appraisal.

Conclusion

The appraisal has determined potential alternative options to reduce the funding gap on option 1. The options appraisal is purely indicative at Outline Business Case stage, and further investigation would need to be conducted in order to determine whether the funding gap could be reduced further. For the preferred option, (1), the next stage may include: modifying the learning centre design, determining additional/alternative funding options, modifying the housing design, and reducing cost for associated infrastructure. This is with the aim of closing the funding gap.

Option 2 exhibits a less positive outcome when compared with option 1; however the funding gap in option 2 is considerably less. If neither option 1 or option 2 is deemed feasible, the risk to the operation of the service (and any future funding received by ESFA) is extremely high, as the space Skills and Learning currently used will be reduced by 322sqm to demolish both the HORSA and the porta cabins.

8. WHO BUILDS AND WHO OPERATES – THE DELIVERY OPTIONS

The two elements of this programme, the learning centre and the housing will be discussed separately.

Oakdale Learning Centre

There is one option related to the delivery of the learning centre

- The local authority procures and builds the new learning centre, and the service is provided by Skills and Learning as it currently is.

New local housing

There are a number of delivery options relating to the delivery of housing. Each of these options would need the viability to be tested thoroughly to understand which option would achieve both the delivery, and value for money

- The local authority seeks planning for the whole site including the learning centre. It tenders and oversees the build contract for the learning centre and then works in partnership with a local housing provider or Poole Housing Partnership to deliver the Housing.
 - The scheme could be 100% affordable
 - The scheme could be mixed tenure but achieving 40% affordable housing which would be policy compliant
- The local authority seeks planning for the whole site including the learning centre. It then tenders the site to the open market with a brief stating the delivery requirements of a new learning centre and 40% affordable housing on site subject to viability.

9. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

9.1 Summary of Project Costs

A summary of indicative project costs for both the learning centre and the housing is as per the Options Appraisal.

9.2 Added Value to the Authority

Added value of adult learning service to the authority

The provision of learning opportunities for low skilled adults and people in jobs without training improves: the productivity of the labour market, the productivity of local businesses and the area as a whole. A higher skilled workforce supports increased income and better health and well-being outcomes for residents. The provision of learning and well-being opportunities is proven to improve: mental and physical health, social mobility, employment and promotional prospects, family relationships and children's attainment reducing dependency on public service interventions. There would be contribution towards local authority Strengthening Communities and Dynamic Economy corporate priorities, and towards Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Plan objectives. Increased participation and fuller classes would increase the Social Return on Investment through more learners achieving positive outcomes eg. jobs, independence, improved mental health and well-being.

The benefits are greatest under Option One.

Added value of additional housing to the authority

The council has a requirement to meet housing targets set out by the government in order to meet its local needs. There are currently over 1,000 households awaiting affordable housing via the Council's housing register including a number of statutory homelessness placements that the Council is required to meet. This project could provide an opportunity to deliver additional housing which contributes to the affordable housing supply.

Significantly more housing is provided under Option One

9.3 Procurement Options

Procurement options

The options surrounding procurement of the construction of the learning centre will be determined dependent upon the outcome agreed at Full Business Case. The Full Business Case will develop an indicative Procurement Strategy. The major stages for the project are as follows:

- Procurement of design team
- Submission of planning application
- Detailed design and Contract Particulars through RIBA stage 3 and 4
- Contractor procurement and award (for learning centre)
- Demolition of site 2
- Construction of learning centre on site 2
- Demolition of site 1
- Site 1 handed over for housing

This timeline shows tendering for the design team through an approved framework, and then procuring the contractor through an Open, OJEU compliant procedure. Once site 1 is available for the housing, a Procurement Strategy will need to be drafted in order that a contractor can legally and compliantly be awarded the work to deliver the

housing. A timeline for the completion of the housing has not been achieved at Outline Business Case stage.

10. BUILD/FUNDING OPTIONS

Build Options

If option 1 is delivered, the learning centre would be constructed following demolition of HORSAs and porta cabins on site 2, and upon completion the service could move into the new centre. Works can then start on the housing on site 2 following demolition. If option 2 is to be delivered, demolition of the HORSAs building and porta cabins would have to be achieved before refurbishment works could be carried out to ensure that the service is provided through temporary classrooms on site 2. Once the refurbishment works is complete, the service can resume in the refurbished centre, and the construction of the housing can begin on site 2.

Option 1 does not require the service to be provided through temporary classrooms. It is possible that some works can be carried out whilst the current centre is open, however this will not be determined until Full Business Case stage.

Housing Valuation

In order to determine the receipts generated by developing either site 1 or site 2 for housing, both housing association, and commercial property agents used the design information by the architect to estimate an income to the council, for the land.

The options available for both sites are:

- Funding (100% affordable - housing association)
- Funding (40% affordable - housing association)
- Funding (40% affordable - commercial sale of land)

Other funding options

Other funding options are contained within the covering report and include DLEP funding and prudential borrowing. There may also be other avenues for funding the project through the Local Government Reorganisation.

11. RISK MITIGATION

A risk register will be continually updated throughout the project.

12. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The project will require the support of, or have impacts on a range of external stakeholders and stakeholders within the Council. The feasibility study has consulted with relevant agencies and stakeholders including:

12.1 External Stakeholders

- The Education and Skills Funding Agency
- Dorset County Council
- Bournemouth Borough Council
- The Health and Safety Executive
- Social Services Training Team
- Contaminated Land Authorities
- Poole Housing Partnership
- Current and future students of the learning centre
- Current and future residents in Oakdale
- The Planning Authority
- The Transportation Authority
- The Environment Agency
- Owners and managers of nearby facilities, including the shops along Dorchester Road
- Local Media
- ORCA
- Potential development contractors
- Utility companies with apparatus on or supplying the learning centre and telephone and internet connectivity

During the early stage of the Local Plan review, officers engaged with residents on this site to consider views on a mixed use housing led redevelopment. 43 responses were submitted to the 2016 Local Plan consultation providing the following feedback; 23 respondents commented on the retention of community facilities / green space, 9 respondents commented on potential traffic impact, 7 respondents had concerns with potential overlooking from flats and 6 respondents commented on heritage impact.

Initial consultation has taken place with ORCA, and they provided a schedule of their space requirements to operate a lively community offer. These have been incorporated within the design, however if delivering option 2, there is no allowance for ORCA's requirements. Consultation with the Social Care Learning & Development Team would also need to be aligned with their annual training planning activity.

From 2019 Combined Authorities in receipt of the Adult Education Budget will receive Education Funding Agency capital grants via their Local Enterprise Partnerships. A capital bid for funding through the Dorset LEP has been submitted, the outcome will be determined in 2019.

12.2 Internal Stakeholders

- Skills and Learning
- Oakdale Centre staff
- Housing and Community Services
- Corporate Communications
- Corporate Procurement

- Legal and Democratic Services
- Financial Services – Estates
- Financial Services - Accountancy
- Financial Services – Property Management
- Council and Council Members
- Ward Councillors

All internal stakeholders have been consulted regularly throughout the Outline Business Case, and have provided necessary input to ensure the project feasibility is portrayed as accurately as possible.

13. CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 Legal and Estates

Estates have been consulted throughout the feasibility study. The title deeds for the land have been documented and checked. There is a section of unregistered land, which sits at the front of the current learning centre and was believed to be a historic vision splay – this has been requested to be registered by estates. The process can take anything up to 6 months. There are some title constraints that are not insurmountable.

The public open space outside of the site is not permitted to be developed upon within the Local Plan unless we can mitigate the loss of this greenspace elsewhere; therefore this has not been included within the designs.

13.2 Planning

The sites are not covered by any specific policy designation in terms of land use. The two most relevant policies in terms of principle are Core Strategy Policy PCS25: Safer Communities and DM2: Heritage Assets. Policy PCS25 seeks to prevent the loss of community facilities, which would need to be addressed by any proposal that proposed the loss of the Adult Education Centre. Policy DM2: Heritage Assets is a key policy as the existing Adult Education Centre is a Locally Listed Building, and therefore a designated heritage asset in terms of the NPPF. The NPPF and DM2 seek to retain heritage assets unless their loss can be outweighed by overriding public benefits.

The prospect of an enhanced adult education facility and affordable homes are considered to be important factors in favour of a comprehensive redevelopment of the site. Planning have been involved during the process of the feasibility study, and a pre-application has been submitted to mitigate potential risks should the project be approved post feasibility stage. The development would also need to comply with the Council's design policies to ensure an acceptable form of development can be achieved, and the project has taken into account the emerging planning policy in the draft Poole Local Plan, which was endorsed for further consultation by Council in July 2017. In the Draft Plan, the sites are identified as having potential for a mixed use development in PP9 site reference U9.

The pre-application focuses on the preferred option; whereby planning have agreed that the proposal has merit. This is based purely upon the feasibility study, and residents have not been visited and their properties assessed for implications if the proposal were to take place, therefore this is an indicative approval at this stage.

The draft policy makes clear that the site could accommodate around 60 homes alongside re-provision of the Adult Education Centre and other community uses. The 60 units specified in the draft Local Plan is a minimum figure and does not prohibit a higher number being achieved with an appropriate design.

13.3 Transportation

Transportation have advised that a development of 60-80 flats would generate less vehicle movements over a day than what is presently being observed on site 1. This would have to be determined through further surveys. There would also be highway safety gains in the proposal if the access to the flats is off the rear road (Darbys Lane) and the existing Dorchester Road access is closed off. In the pre-application the entrance to the new learning centre is currently too close to the signals, therefore if the development access is off Dorchester Road then Transportation would support the proposal, if this access is moved further east along Dorchester road. Transportation have also requested that a 0.8m wide strip of land along the Dorchester Road frontage be secured as Highway land for a potential future junction improvement scheme on Dorchester Road. This strip of land can remain as a landscape strip until such time as the junction improvement scheme comes forward.

Transportation have also advised that a minimum of 0.8 car parking spaces is required per 3 room unit, if the spaces are unallocated. This is the lowest size unit the parking policy includes. Therefore for every 1 bed unit, a minimum of 0.8 spaces will need to be provided. For every two bed unit under the Council's parking guidelines 0.8 parking spaces will be accepted if the units are open plan lounge/kitchen/dining (ie 3 room units), although 1 space per unit would be preferred. The 0.8 parking space ratio would again need to be unallocated parking. If any 3 bed units are included within the design, then the Council's parking guideline would seek 1 parking space per unit if the parking bays are unallocated and if they are also open plan lounge/kitchen/dining room (ie. 4 room units), although for these larger units 2 spaces per unit would be preferred. 1 and 2 bed units are being proposed for this project, 20% of which are 1 bed, with no parking. This is consistent with Housing and Community Services support of the scheme.

13.4 Constraints

- Construction of a new learning centre is only possible if a sustainable funding stream is secured. The development of housing on site 1 is only possible if the learning centre is demolished and relocated to site 2.
- The development of the new learning centre must comply with all relevant building bulletins and internal and external space requirements.
- All changes to the site must comply with planning, environmental and health and safety regulatory requirements during the design, construction and on-going operation stages.

13.5 Communications Plan

Consultation with the communications team has been carried out, with a view that no public consultation is required unless the project is approved to progress to Full Business Case.

13.6 Regeneration of Oakdale

Through the release of public sector land and the utilisation of a specified site located in a sustainable travel to work location, a minimum of 60 affordable housing residences will contribute to current local shortages and the aspirations of the Local Plan and the DLEP Supporting Dorset's Economic Growth – Future Housing Provision guidance policy. The projected growth in employment in three of the seven priority sectors identified by the LEP (care, retail & tourism, with lower wage rates, part-time/seasonal/temporary employment) will require housing that staff in these sectors can afford.

The Oakdale site meets the sustainable criteria in a travel to work area with good access to public transport links and services. The project delivers multiple benefits for the local area ensuring that the local community would retain access to a wide range of learning opportunities to improve their life chances and quality of life. A forecast 30% increase in participation, (equating to nearly 500 more workers and un/under employed people), would benefit from the new adult skills retraining facility. The community will gain a drop in community careers and enterprise information hub and internet café to support local business start ups, recruiting employers and jobseekers and a study skills centre. Up to 300 new business start ups would be an outcome of the enterprise hub offer supporting people into self employment as a progression from Digital, Creative Industries, Hair/Beauty & Complimentary Therapies and Finance qualifications.

Residences will benefit from the adjacent Oakdale park facility and children's play area, retail units, GP and library. The housing would also be adjacent to the medical centre, shops, library, and nearby schools and has good public transport links. The site is suitable for a high density scheme making use of taller buildings.

13.7 Surveys

Whilst a number of surveys have been completed for the aims of the feasibility study it must be acknowledged that further surveys would need to be conducted in order to create more accurate costs.

Topographical, utilities, and geotechnical and ground condition surveys were undertaken. The utilities search did not pose any problems, with sufficient gas capacity available, however further confirmation on the electric supply would need to be provided by SSE, and it is predicted that additional substations may be required. Utilities survey also highlighted that only capacity of water sufficient for a domestic supply to the development would be available. Further surveys would need to be conducted in order to inform if commercial supply would be possible.

The geotechnical survey was completed at desktop level, and it is recommended physical surveys are taken from the site, as there could be the potential for ground contamination. No ecological issues were raised, but further surveys would be needed if taken to Full Business Case. There is not believe to be any arboriculture issues, however no surveys were conducted at this stage.

13.8 Alternative service delivery models

The Outline Business Case has not looked at alternative models of delivering the current service.

14. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An equality impact assessment has been completed.

15. FULL BUSINESS CASE

Phase two feasibility would complete a detailed business case including developed design to RIBA Stage 3. A budget for this second phase is likely to be in the region of £200k.

16. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the options appraisal two options have been identified: option 1 and option 2. Both options exhibit a funding gap. Further feasibility on option 1 could potentially reduce the funding gap through: modifying the learning centre design, determining additional/alternative funding options, modifying the housing design, and reducing cost for associated infrastructure.