

To: EDUCATION COMMITTEE		Subject: CRAIGNEUK EMPLOYABILITY RESOURCE
From: HEAD OF EDUCATION (SKILLS, LIFELONG LEARNING & YOUTH EMPLOYMENT)		
Date: 11 JANUARY 2017	Ref: LMcM/PK/EW	

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report seeks approval from Committee for the carrying out of repairs necessary to ensure the former Craigneuk Library building is fit for purpose to serve as an enhanced employability resource within the community.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Context**

The re-configuration of the library service within Craigneuk and the subsequent closure of the library building in October 2016 has presented an opportunity to enhance the delivery of employability services within that community. Routes to Work Ltd, the Council's arms length external organisation for the delivery of free and community based employability support, have a long standing presence in the area within the Council owned Regeneration Bungalow at 59 Shieldmuir Street, Craigneuk. For some time they have been keen to enhance and promote their service further within the area. Therefore, discussions have been held between Routes to Work and NL Properties with a view to Routes to Work leasing the former library building for their long term use once adapted to meet their needs.

**3.0 CONSIDERATIONS**

**3.1 Future Plans**

The former library building will offer Routes to Work increased floor space and a location which will allow the delivery of employability services within the area to be enhanced and expanded.

Alongside their existing one to one case worker service, the new building offers the flexibility to deliver on site group sessions and training activities to participants. This offers a number of advantages on current provision:

- training can be delivered locally in Craigneuk;
- increased volume of training services running in parallel with other activities; and
- reduction in the need to hire training suites.

The increased flexibility will also offer opportunities for partners who complement the current offer to integrate further with local programmes by allowing them to offer drop-in surgery type arrangements for participants or to participate in the delivery of group and training activities.

Another key benefit is that due to increased broadband speed available in this facility, as well as the current job search facility being retained, the IT facilities offered to participants will be of a standard that fits with current requirements for the administration of employability programmes.

Greater visibility, using appropriate signage which can highlight the purpose of the facility as an employability hub will also encourage an increase the uptake of employability services in the area

Lastly, alongside the relocation of the service there will be a renewed community engagement campaign across the area to encourage residents to join the Council's free and voluntary employability programmes.

### **3.2 Lease and Alterations**

Routes to Work are in the process of negotiating the terms of the new lease and entry date with NL Properties. The entry date is subject to the building being fit for purpose for its new use and a number of alterations and repairs have been identified. These include telephone and IT facilities that can offer participants in employability programmes the training and access they need as well as for the administration of the facility. These costs can be met from existing budgets.

However, there is a major repair required which was previously identified through the Council's condition survey of the building in 2014 and is in relation to the nine windows within the building. These require replacement as the timber framed units are weathered and rotten and need replacement with uPVC glazed units. In addition, enhanced security is required due to the confidential nature of the information held within Routes to Work's services and therefore each window requires an external shutter.

## **4.0 CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **4.1 Financial Considerations**

Current estimate of costs for the external shutters and window replacement is £40,000 and it is proposed that this cost be met from the Education Skills and Youth Employment Wind and Watertight Capital Budget 2017/18.

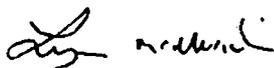
### **4.2 Next Steps**

Routes to Work are keen to move in to the new building and begin delivering their service from these premises. In the short term they would keep their lease on the Regeneration Bungalow and store confidential information on those premises.

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to

- (i) approve the carrying out of repairs necessary to ensure the former Craigneuk Library building is fit for purpose as an employability resource; and
- (ii) otherwise note this positive development of employability services in the Craigneuk area.



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