

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Surplus Declaration of Gibside School, Burnthouse Lane, Whickham

**REPORT OF:** Peter Udall, Strategic Director: Economy, Innovation and Growth

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to the property known as Gibside School being declared surplus to the Council's requirements.

### **Background**

2. At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018 (Minute No. C14), Cabinet agreed the principle of transferring Gibside School to a new site on the former Shipcote Playing Field and to expand its numbers to develop a new build special educational needs school for 170 pupils. The scheme and estimate to build the new school were approved on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019 (Min No. C43) and construction is nearing completion. It is anticipated that Gibside School will relocate to its new accommodation over half term in February 2021.
3. Consideration has therefore been given to the future use of the existing Gibside School site in Whickham, shown edged black on the attached plan. While the property is in reasonable condition, it is not considered to be suitable for any alternative use by the Council.
4. As the property is held for Education purposes, Secretary of State consent to any form of disposal would be required under Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010, and Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

### **Proposal**

5. It is proposed that the property, shown edged black on the attached plan be declared surplus to the Council's requirements.

### **Recommendations**

6. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the proposal to declare the property surplus to the Council's requirements.

For the following reason:

To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.

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### Policy Context

1. The proposed surplus declaration supports the overall vision for Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives. In particular, investing in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth
2. The proposed declaration will also accord with the provisions of the update of the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 – 2020. In particular;
  - (i) to manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.

### Background

3. At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018 (Minute No. C14), Cabinet agreed the principle of transferring Gibside School to a new site on the former Shipcote Playing Field and to expand its numbers to develop a new build special educational needs school for 170 pupils. The scheme and estimate to build the new school were approved on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019 (Min No. C43) and construction is nearing completion. It is anticipated that Gibside School will relocate to its new accommodation over half term in February 2021.
4. Consideration has therefore been given to the future use of the existing Gibside School site in Whickham. While the property is in reasonable condition, it is not considered to be suitable for any alternative use by the Council.
5. The Gibside School site is shown edged black on the attached plan and is currently held for education purposes.
6. Consequently, any disposal (including grant of a lease or appropriation) would be subject to the provisions of Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010 which requires the specific consent of the Secretary of State to be obtained prior to the disposal of any land which has been used wholly or mainly for the purposes of a school at any time in the preceding 8 years. In addition, as the school grounds satisfy the definition of a school playing field in section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, consent of the Secretary of State would also be required under this statute prior to any disposal of playing fields which are, immediately before the disposal used by a maintained school for the purposes of the school or which are not so used but have been so used within a period of 10 years.

### Consultation

7. In preparing this report consultations have taken place with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, Housing and Environment & Transport. The Ward Councillors for Whickham North have also been consulted.

## **Alternative Options**

8. The option of retaining the property has been discounted as the Council has no further requirement for the accommodation.

## **Implications of Recommended Option**

### 9. **Resources:**

**a) Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that should the property be sold it is expected to generate a capital receipt.

**b) Human Resources Implications** - There are no direct staffing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

**c) Property Implications** - Any future disposal of this property would result in a reduction in the Council's overall property portfolio thus reducing operational costs.

10. **Risk Management Implication** - Any future disposal of this property would remove opportunities for vandalism to a vulnerable property.

11. **Equality and Diversity** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

12. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - Any future disposal of this property would remove opportunities for crime and disorder, especially vandalism and theft.

13. **Health Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

14. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - Any future disposal of this property will reduce the level of the Council's operational costs, including gas and electricity use, which will subsequently result in a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint.

15. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

16. **Ward Implications** – Whickham North.

17. **Background Information** – Council Min Nos C14 (2018/19) and C43 (2019/20)