



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Pharmacy at Grove
<b>Date:</b>	20 June 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext. 6217.
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ken Anderson, Estates Surveyor, Core Improvement Team, Ext. 3496.

### Relevant Background Information

By way of a series of legal agreements Belfast City Council and the Belfast Social Care Trust have agreed terms to allow the Trust to construct and operate a new Health centre as part of the Grove Well-Being Centre. In return the Trust and Belfast Education and Library Board agreed to transfer to the Council the site of their existing Health Centre and library at Skegoneill Avenue.

As part of the relocation of Health Services from the Skegoneill Health Centre to the new Grove Well-Being Centre the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have planned for the re-location of pharmacy services within their section of the Well-Being Centre. To this end they have proposed arrangements with the existing Pharmacist at Skegoneill (Dundee Pharmacies).

The Trust's proposal in relation to re-location of the existing pharmacist may come under legal challenge from other pharmacists in the locality and the Trust have therefore acted to mitigate the impact of this on the provision of pharmacy services at the Well-Being Centre.

Their current proposal is to provide the existing pharmacist with what is known as 'a temporary re-location' under pharmacy practice rules. This arrangement would enable the pharmacy to be housed on a temporary basis within the new Health Centre and thus provide continuity of services pending the outcome of any legal action. However because the 'temporary re-location' is time limited the pharmacist is required, when making application to the Pharmacy Board to undertake to return to his previous location at the end of the temporary period (which can be up to 12 months). This 'undertaking to return' presents the existing pharmacist with some difficulties in that the

Skegoneill Health Centre will likely have been demolished by that time.

In discussions between the Trust's solicitors and officers from the Council's Legal Services Department and Estates Management Unit, officers undertook to seek Members views on an accommodation which would permit the pharmacist to give the necessary undertaking (regarding return to existing location) but would strictly limit the duration of any future trading from the Skegoneill site.

Certainly the absence of any pharmacy services at the Well-Being Centre (even on a temporary basis) would detract from the attractiveness of the facility as a one stop shop and to some extent undermine the key rationale on which the project is being promoted.

### **Key Issues**

- Legal arrangements between the Belfast Social Care Trust and their selected pharmacist could come under legal challenge resulting in the short to medium term absence of pharmacy services at the Grove Well-Being Centre.
- To provide continuity of pharmacy service the Trust wish the use a 'temporary re-location' procedure which would allow the existing pharmacist to trade at the new Centre for a limited period.
- Under Pharmacy Board rules the temporary re-location requires undertakings by the pharmacist to return to the original location.
- As part of the arrangements associated with the provision of the Well-Being Centre the Council has acquired ownership of the Skegoneill Health Centre site. The Trust will be required to deliver this to the Council as a cleared site.
- The Council is being requested to agree in principle to allow return of the pharmacist to the Skegoneill site should that become necessary at the end of the 'temporary re-location' (max. period 12 months) from Skegoneill to Grove. Such return to be strictly limited to a period not exceeding nine months and subject to the pharmacist providing any necessary temporary accommodation, complying with all statutory requirements and paying an appropriate rent to the Council.

### **Resource Implications**

#### Financial

None at this stage. No expenditure envisaged with potential short term income stream to Council.

#### Human Resources

No additional human resources required.

#### Asset and Other Implications

Short term impact on the ability of the Council to fully utilise the site of the Skegoneill Health Centre site which is currently being transferred to the Council from the BSCT.

<b>Recommendations</b>
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Members are recommended to provide 'in principle' approval to permit a future short term arrangement, of up to nine months, with Dundee Pharmacy, in relation to the site of the present Skegoneill Health Centre, should such an arrangement become necessary and any arrangements with Dundee Pharmacy to be subject to terms as agreed by the Estates Manager and a legal agreement to be drawn up by the Director of Legal Services.
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<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
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BSCT – Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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<b>Documents Attached</b>
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