

## **CABINET**

**22 NOVEMBER 2016**

### **SMOKEFREE ADVICE CENTRE, CHATHAM**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Adrian Gulvin, Resources  
Councillor David Brake, Adult Services

Report from: Perry Holmes, Chief Legal Officer  
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#### **Summary**

This report seeks delegated authority for the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to take a new lease of the Council's Smokefree Advice Centre at 2/2A Railway Street, Chatham or other alternative premises on the best terms reasonably obtainable.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 As the rent payable for a new lease will be more than £20,000 pa, this is a matter for Cabinet.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 The Smokefree Advice Centre opened on 1 August 2015 and its service is considered integral to the success of the council's stop smoking service which is achieving encouraging results and rates well in comparison to other south eastern and national locations.

2.2 The Council's sub lease of the above shop premises at 2/2A Railway Street has expired and the Council is now holding over and remains in occupation of the premises. The sub lease was completed using the Chief Legal Officer's delegated authority as the rent was not over £20,000 pa.

2.3 The Council's Landlord has accepted the Council's continued occupation of the premises as a temporary measure whilst marketing

the premises. A third party has now shown interest in taking a lease of the premises and the Council's current agreement with the landlord can be ended at short notice, which would have the effect of closing the existing service.

- 2.4 Agreement to acceptable terms for a new lease is being sought, however, should the Landlord prefer to let the premises to a third party, the option to identify and take a letting of suitable alternative premises would be pursued.

### 3. Impact of Smokefree Advice Centre

3.1 The Smokefree Advice Centre (SAC) opened on 1st of August 2015, but was officially launched on 9th October 2015. Two clinics closed when the centre opened: Chatham Library (CL) and Nucleus Arts Centre (NAC). From opening to May 2016, there were 2,543 engagements with clients, of which 1,723 were for the Stop Smoking Service. A total of 599 new clients were recorded as having at least one consultation; although 172 did not proceed with treatment. Of the new clients, 91 were "walk-ins". A "walk in" is a self-referred client who has not booked an initial assessment with the advice centre. Many of these clients cited the shop front as the reason they knew the service existed and walked in to find out more details about quitting smoking.

3.2 Medway Stop Smoking Service has seen a significant increase in the number of clients since opening the Smokefree Advice Centre (SAC). The table below demonstrates the difference in numbers accessing treatment and successfully quitting for comparable time periods before and after opening the SAC:

Time period	Venue	Quit Date Set	Quit
01/08/2014-31/05/2015	Chatham Library & Nuclues Art Center	182	88
01/08/2015-31/05/2016	Smokefree Advice Centre	299	130

3.3 Nationally there has been a 15% decline in quit attempts between 2014/15 and 2015/16, and a 15% decline in actual quits for the same period. Locally we are not experiencing the same trend, as shown below, which we have put down to our innovative approach to the service, such as providing High Street shop locations to raise awareness and provide an accessible service. For 2015/16 Medway is third in the South East for quits per 100,000 and in the top 25% for the whole country. The activity for the core team (compared to community pharmacy and GP staff who work to SLAs to deliver quits) who have predominantly worked from the shop for the last 2 quarters, show that 40% of all quits have been achieved within this setting alone. At the start 2016/17 of the year the shop was set a target of quits to achieve each quarter, with quarter 1 achieving 120% of the target.

#### **4. Additional benefits of the Smokefree Advice Centre**

- 4.1 Since the refurbishment 2 other clinic rooms were created allowing private consultations for other interventions that include adult weight management services, specialist support for mental health clients to quit smoking, specialist support for pregnant mums to quit smoking, weight management support groups. These other public health services are saving money by not renting external venues and are instead reallocating the previously used funds to pay for the shop rental and bills.
- 4.2 The venue has an excellent training and meeting space which is used daily by the PH team, other council services and key partner agencies. To date, no cross charging has incurred, but if a higher rental fee was negotiated fees could be agreed that still make it a cost-effective option for partners, with an income generation target set by the department.
- 4.3 With a very large shop window and entrance foyer, the venue has been used to promote several health and wellbeing campaign and other council service agendas, including; road safety, oral health month, breastfeeding, One You, community safety. These advertising opportunities provide another avenue for the setting to be used to generate income.
- 4.4 The staff working from the shop are working more efficiently than previously, as they spend less time commuting to community outreach clinics and in between appointments, or if a client does not turn up for an appointment, they have access to thin client machines and can carry on with administrative duties that their roles entail.
- 4.5 The venue is to be used for high profile launch events and one-off promotion campaigns such as the Normalising Breast Feeding campaign in September and Mouth Cancer Awareness month in November. These campaigns will involve engaging people on the streets, and inviting them inside for private consultations, such as a free oral health check-up. These types of High Street intervention are significantly easier with a venue with private clinic space. The charges for this type of temporary space would be considerable, and availability of appropriate venues is very limited.

#### **5. Future plans for Smokefree Advice Centre**

- As of 1 September 2016 we have extended the shop hours to increase accessibility for clients accessing the stop smoking service
- Consideration will be given to rebranding the shop to reflect the wider lifestyle services that are accessible from the venue (i.e. weight management)
- Development of a realistic income target with a pricing schedule for other services and key partners to contribute to overheads
- Project plan developed to maximise the clinic, meeting and office space so that the venue becomes as cost efficient as possible.

## 6. Options

- 6.1 Agree a new lease on the best terms reasonably obtainable in order to retain the existing service in Chatham town centre until at least the end of March 2020.
- 6.2 Decline to agree a new lease agreement which could result in closure of the existing facility early in the New Year.
- 6.3 The option set out in paragraph 6.1 is the preferred way forward.

## 7. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Reduction in the effectiveness of the Council's stop smoking service	Closure of the service provided by the Smokefree Advice Centre	Negotiate a new lease agreement on the best terms reasonably obtainable	C2

## 8. Consultation

- 8.1 Consultation has taken place with the Public Health Directorate (Health and Wellbeing Services) and the proposed course of action is supported.

## 9. Financial and legal implications

- 9.1 The Head of Health and Wellbeing Services is satisfied that the proposed new lease agreement can be funded within the current budget until at least 31 March 2020 when Public Health's current ring fenced budget ends.
- 9.2 Negotiations have taken place to establish the level of rental that will apply on agreeing a new lease and officers are confident that a fair and reasonable agreement can be attained.

## 10. Recommendation

- 10.1 That Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to take a new lease of 2/2a Railway Street, Chatham, or other alternative premises (if necessary), which the Council can end no later than 31 March 2020 on the best terms reasonably obtainable.

## **11. Suggested reasons for decision**

- 11.1 To ensure that the council's Stop Smoking Service continues to be fully effective and successful by maintaining this service which supports the important work of improving public health in Medway.

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### **Appendices**

None

### **Background Papers:**

None