

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting20th February 2020

1. Title of Item/Report

Office Accommodation - Outcome of Option Appraisal and Business Case

2. Record of the Decision

Further to the conclusions and recommendations arising from the People Select Committee's Review of Smarter Working in Stockton - Accommodation and Buildings which recommended that the Council explore the option to create a single building for office accommodation, Cabinet considered the outcome of a detailed option appraisal and business case for the proposal.

The report summarised the extent, capacity and condition of each of the current buildings within the Council's portfolio, with it being noted that the subsequent condition surveys concluded after the Scrutiny Review confirmed that there was £25m in outstanding maintenance for the ten existing buildings. The report therefore recommended a solution; i.e. the creation of a new single building for office accommodation, which would 'futureproof' the Council's office accommodation, be cheaper than investing in repairs and maintenance and would have a significantly longer life span.

This proposal was also set against the context of considering the reshaping of Stockton Town Centre (considered elsewhere on this agenda) and sought to retain a Council presence in Billingham Town Centre albeit in a smaller building than at present. Existing contact centres in Billingham, Thornaby and Ingleby Barwick would be unaffected by the proposal, whilst the new office accommodation would incorporate Stockton's existing library and customer centre.

It was suggested that development of a new facility in Stockton should at the same time consider the facilities currently within the Town Hall, and in particular the Council Chamber. These were in need of improvement also and therefore should be considered at the same time.

The proposal, if approved, would release the current sites held by the Council for future development and work would therefore be undertaken

to explore options which would be considered within the context of the Council's plans and visions for our Town Centres and its commitment to affordable housing.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Cabinet approve the development of new office accommodation for the Council consisting of:

- A main building to be located in Stockton Town Centre;
- A smaller second building to be based in Billingham Town Centre.

2. Cabinet agree to re-direct the £1m per year outlined in the December MTFP update report to fund the maintenance of the current buildings, to fund the Prudential Borrowing or lease costs and that this be included in the 2020/21 Budget Report and MTFP update presented to Council in February 2020.

3. Cabinet agree that officers assess the option of renovating and modernising the Council Chamber and consider incorporating the facilities into the new development.

4. Cabinet agree that work is undertaken to progress options to maximise the value of the current buildings through sale or redevelopment.

5. A further report be presented to Cabinet to agree the final scheme proposals, funding methodology, final financial position, proposals for the Town Hall and current sites.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To present the option for the future of office accommodation. The recommendations within the report are also complementary to the Town Centre report on the agenda.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Option 1 – Basic refurbishment - Retain the four larger buildings of Municipal Buildings, Bayheath House, Kingsway House and Queensway House, carry out a basic refurbishment and release six buildings for either disposal or lease.

Option 2 – Remodel - An extension of option 1 retaining the 4 larger buildings but with each stripped to the shell (acknowledging the limitations of each building) to provide an open space to be completely

re-modelled allowing a flexible design.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillors Cook & Cooke each declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of this item as they had a family member employed by the Council.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight 28 February 2020

Proper Officer
24 February 2020