

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR PROPERTY

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee for Property was held on 30 September 2014.

PRESENT: Councillors D Budd (Chair), M Carr and T Harvey and C M Rooney

PRESENT AS OBSERVERS: Councillor C Hobson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Member of the Press

OFFICIALS: Judith Hedgley and Susie Blood

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor J Rostron and Councillor J Sharrocks

14/17 RELOCATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH REGISTER OFFICE

The Executive Director Commercial and Corporate Services submitted a report that outlined the proposal for the Accommodation Review relating to the Register Office and made recommendations for the next steps.

The Council's approach under the Change Programme was to locate staff in fewer buildings. As part of this review, the potential relocation of the Register Office to the Town Hall was considered. At the time, the potential costs of this (estimated at around £630k) were prohibitive. Further review of the proposed relocation were undertaken in line with a comprehensive service review to see if operational practice could be changed in ways which would reduce the demand for space and, therefore, the costs of the relocation. This resulted in reducing costs by £259,000 to £371,000.

Subsequently, the relocation of the Register Office had been confirmed in the Mayor's proposals for implementation in 2014/15. The relocation of the Registration Service next to the Coroner Service, already relocated within the Town Hall, would assist with closer working relationships and the proposed joint service delivery which would provide a better service to the bereaved.

The Register Office would attract an additional annual footfall of at approximately 20,000 people into the Town Hall where additional Council Services could be made available to them.

During the meeting, the members of the Committee and Councillor C Hobson made comment on the report.

The report outlined that there were two options available:

1. Option 1 - The Register Office to remain in its current accommodation. This would not be in accordance with the Mayor's Budget Statement and the Mayor's Vision for Transforming the Town. It would not support the Change Programme's priority to locate staff in fewer buildings and there would be no savings in terms of accommodation revenue costs.
2. Option 2 - To locate the Register Office to the Town Hall. This would provide an improved service to the public and support the Mayor's Budget Statement and Vision for the Town. It would also enable closer working with the Teesside Coroners Service.

ORDERED

1. **that the relocation of the Register Office to the Town Hall be agreed;**
2. **that the demolition of the existing building to establish a car park in this location, pending any future development be approved; and**
3. **that the savings be noted.**

REASONS

The decisions were supported by the following reasons:

- 1. The relocation of the Register Office was included in the Mayor's Budget Statement.**
- 2. The relocation of the service and staff into an existing Council building is in line with the Change Programme to reduce the number of accommodation buildings.**
- 3. To improve the service offered to the customers.**
- 4. To improve the delivery of the Registration Service to the public by closer and more efficient working with the Coroner's Service.**
- 5. To free up a key town centre site to enable further enhancements to Centre Square.**

The decision will come into force after five working days following the day the decision was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.