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| Decision maker: | Chief finance officer |
| Decision date: | 6 July 2017 |
| Title of report: | Relocation of 16+ and participation teams |
| Report by: | Business change manager |

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not a key decision.

Wards affected

Central / Widemarsh

Purpose

To approve the relocation of the council's 16+ and participation teams from No 4 Blackfriars Street, Hereford to the new Bath Street offices, (Media Centre), Bath Street, Hereford and the relocation of service users' personal items from No 5 Blackfriars Street into appropriate storage facilities.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) **The 16+ and Participation teams be relocated from their current site in Blackfriars Street to the new bath Street offices at a cost of £23k (building works at new Bath Street offices as detailed in appendix A) and £5.5k relocation costs; and**
- (b) **A longer term solution to the accommodation needs for the 16+ and Participation teams is identified.**

Alternative options

- 1 Do nothing. This is not recommended as the existing building is not fit for purpose for service delivery, as well as to this the continuing risk to the safety of members of staff while they remain in their current location.
- 2 Source an alternative accommodation solution that is fit for purpose to house the service. Alternative existing council buildings were considered as a long or short term

solution but these were deemed not to be appropriate due to the nature of the service being provided.

Reasons for recommendations

- 3 The client group have arrange of behavioural issues which require certain safety measures to be in place to ensure staff and other service users are not compromised; in addition to which the size of the 16+ team has increased which means that No 4 is no longer suitable from a health and safety point of view.
- 4 In order to accommodate additional safety measures some minor alterations within the new Bath Street offices are required to enable this moves to take place, these will introduce improved safety for both members of staff and service users.
- 5 In the role of corporate parent the council currently store's service users' personal items within No. 5 Blackfriars Street. Some of these items do not comply with health and safety requirements for the building they are currently in; therefore they need to be relocated to purpose built storage facilities.

Key considerations

- 6 The council acts as the corporate parent for children who are leaving or have left care until they reach the age of 21 (24 if been in higher education)
- 7 The current accommodation at No 4 Blackfriars Street has been deemed no longer suitable for the needs of the service for reasons stated above.
- 8 The new Bath Street offices will provide a short term solution, with minimal alteration, sufficient accommodation for both the 16+ and participation teams.
- 9 The estimated costs for the building alteration requirements are as set out in the schedule of works at appendix A; these works will be undertaken by the Council's contracted Building repairs and Maintenance Services Contract.
- 10 Relocation support will be procured in accordance with the Council's procedure rules (May 2017) to ensure value for money is obtained.
- 11 Both No 4 and No 5 Blackfriars Street will be unoccupied and it future will be considered as part of the asset challenge process.

Community impact

- 12 Keeping children and young people safe and giving them a great start in life is a key priority within the council's corporate plan the recommendation above will contribute to this.

Equality duty

- 13 The Public Sector Equality Duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying "due regard" in our decision making in the design of polices and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions and internal staff accommodation we do not believe that it will have an impact on our Equality duty

Financial implications

- 14 This move involves the relocation of 14 members of staff. In order to enable these moves, some minor building alterations need to be undertaken, these include additional equipment for service users to facilitate life skills awareness and the required health and safety adaptations that will improve the safety of both service users and members of staff, plus the relocation of the personal items that the council are storing on behalf of service users in No. 5 Blackfriars Street.
- 15 The total costs for these are not expected to exceed £28.5k and this will be funded from an existing corporate accommodation strategy capital budget.
- 16 The business case for occupation of Nelson House, as approved by Cabinet on 11 February 2016, was predicated upon the vacation of Bath Street (Media Centre) offices during 2016/17. Whilst accommodation strategy savings are still anticipated to be delivered in full, it should be noted that the continued occupation of these offices has therefore created a budget pressure which has had to be overcome. The Media Centre currently costs circa £125k, this being annual rent, business rates, utilities and maintenance costs, the lease for the Media Centre expires Sept 2018
- 17 The ongoing storage cost for the storage of service users' personal items will be funded by the service area budget.

Legal implications

- 18 The council is able to make this operational decision. It currently leases the Bath Street office and this is due to expire in (date). Number 4 and 5 are owned by the council. No further legal agreements are required in relation to the property moves.
- 19 The contract for services which both recommendations refer to will need to be procured in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules.

Risk management

- 20 As the lead time for mobilisation of alternative suitable accommodation for key services is significant, if this process is not planned and executed with pace, there is a risk that service delivery and staff health and safety will continue to be compromised
- 21 The proposed accommodation is known to the council as it is the existing tenant. The building is safe and its services and procedures are well maintained and compliant. If alternative accommodation has to be sourced, such assurances will take time to be established. The running costs are known and predictable for the remainder of the lease.

Consultees

- 22 Chair of Corporate Parent Panel.

Appendices

Appendix A – Schedule of works for Bath Street Offices.

Background papers

- None identified.