

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Refurbishment of [REDACTED]
Date of decision:	21/05/2024
Decision maker:	Hilary Hall, Director for Community Wellbeing
Authority for delegated decision:	Cabinet Member housing, regulatory services, and community safety approval of the Empty Property and Development Capital Budget Decision - Empty Property and Development Capital Budget (herefordshire.gov.uk)
Ward:	Widemarsh
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation has taken place through Herefordshire Homeless Forum with a wide range of statutory agencies and Community Voluntary Faith Sector groups. • Cllr Gandy – Cabinet member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing • Cllr Andrew - Widemarsh Ward • Property Services • Finance
Decision made:	To refurbish [REDACTED] with a budget of up to £250,000 to be used as transitional accommodation for females with priority given to Looked after Children and Care Leavers
Reasons for decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property is a Herefordshire Council asset and surplus to the requirements of children services who were occupying it. If an alternative use cannot be found the property would be disposed of at auction. • As a Corporate Parent the Council has a joint housing and care leavers protocol, it is recognised that self contained accommodation is the most suitable accommodation for Looked after Children and Care Leavers. • The property forms part of the homeless pathway and will be transitional for up to 2 years whilst individual receives light touch support to become tenancy ready and supported to source permanent accommodation. • Accommodating clients in temporary accommodation such as Bed & Breakfast has a revenue implication to council as not all costs are able to be reclaimed from central government. The acquisition could make a revenue saving. To date we have spent £190k since April 24 on temporary accommodation. • It supports all of the People commitments in the Council Plan 24 – 28 and working with partners to provide high quality housing to meet all needs under the Councils Growth and commitment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The properties will be refurbished to a high sustainability criteria. • Having empty properties in the City Centre does not comply with the Empty Property Strategy
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property will require planning permission for change of use, refurbishment and conversion. We have converted 2 other properties in the same street and it has not been an issue to secure planning approval. • The property will require building works that will be procured in accordance with the councils contract procedure rules • A capital budget has been identified for the refurbishment works
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Demand is out stripping supply, there is not an alternative options. If we do not purchase additional accommodation then Chain Hotels/ B&B's will continue to be used at a considerable expense to the council.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	If any officers or members involved or consulted in the decision-making have declared an interest you should include the declaration here.

Signed..... Date: