

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE



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PORTFOLIO	Resources
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Asset Management Planning Capital Programme – Parker Lane Works 2009/10

PURPOSE

1. To update Members on progress on the proposals for Accommodation Works to Council buildings.
2. To seek approval from the Executive to prepare tender documentation for these Accommodation Works, which will be funded from the Capital Programme 2009/10.

RECOMMENDATION

3. The Executive approves the principles of undertaking the Accommodation Works recommended and their implementation in 2009/10.
4. The Executive approves these works to Council buildings, as shown in Appendix 1, at a cost of up to an estimated sum of £235,000, to be funded from the Council's 2009/10 Capital Programme.
5. The Executive authorises the Head of Property Consultancy, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources, to tender the works in accordance with Standing Orders and accept the most advantageous tender for works.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

6. Inappropriate and underused property is an unnecessary drain on resources. As such, in accordance to the Accommodation Strategy Baseline Study 2008/09, the works recommended set out a clear path to maximise office space usage, whilst increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of Service Units, in line with the Council's corporate aims and Strategic Objectives. It also sets out to meet our customers' needs and changing service agenda.
7. The framework of the proposed works, as shown in Appendix 1, was developed based on the aforementioned principles. Further detailed scheme development works are required this financial year and it is recommended that the physical works be implemented in the next financial year.

8. It is important that staff enjoy a secure working environment, particularly where services are provided to the general public and this will be provided by this solution, which has been approved by relevant Heads of Service and Management Team.
9. The carrying out of these works will lead to estimated Revenue Budget savings of £22,000 in Planning and Environment and £30,000 in Housing and Regeneration. These savings cannot be achieved if these works are not undertaken.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Background

10. A report on the Accommodation Strategy Baseline Study 2008/09 was presented to Executive on 14th October 2008. This study was based on the core principles of optimising use of office assets to maximise service benefits and financial returns. At the Executive meeting, the Implementation Plan was discussed and it was agreed that further work was required on this and a report would be presented to a future Executive.
11. The Plan suggests the following arrangements within the buildings for Service Units:-

Building	Level	Service Units
Parker Lane Offices	Ground Floor	Revenue & Benefits
	First Floor	Planning & Environmental Services (part) Regeneration & Economic Development CECU
	Second Floor	Housing Elevate
Contact Centre	Ground Floor	Customer Services (including counter services for Planning and Environment Services – Licensing, Building Control and Development Control)
	First Floor	Planning & Environmental Services (part)

This Plan strives to bring complementary services together in a same building to encourage greater efficiency and better service delivery whilst optimising space usage.

12. It also addresses issues of accommodation for the Planning and Environment Unit that have existed for some time. In 2007, 18 staff (out of 60) were moved from Padiham Town Hall to temporary accommodation in Parker Lane on the understanding that a permanent solution would be provided in 2008 linked to the Accommodation Strategy Baseline Study.

There are also 6 Licensing staff at Nicholas Street and two counter services are operating at both Nicholas Street and on the first floor at Parker Lane. Neither of these counters are DDA compliant and both provide poor customer experience.

This solution leads to the provision of counter services at one location at the Contact Centre.

The restructure within Housing and Regeneration and this solution for Planning and Environment also allows all the Housing and Regeneration services to be located in one building, which is the Parker Lane Offices.

13. Amongst others, consideration was given to the Council's Customer Access Strategy, Information Services Strategy and the implementation of the Electronic Document Records Management (EDRM) within the Council.
14. It is recommended that the proposal be developed alongside the IT infrastructure upgrades. Information Services to consider either bringing forward the implementation of Wifi System across the Council to 2009/10 or exploring phasing the implementation with Parker Lane Office (in part or whole) being the 'trial run' building.
15. This solution was arrived at after undertaking an Option Appraisal and consultation with Management Team and Heads of Service. It has taken some time to agree an option that is acceptable to everyone involved.
16. An alternative solution that was considered in relation to office accommodation was to develop a purpose-built office that is centrally located, modern, sustainable and thermally efficient.
17. The other option that was briefly explored was relocating the back office services to the fringes of Burnley Town Centre and retaining only frontline services in the town centre.
18. It was decided that the two alternative solutions above would be something to consider in the longer-term. Given the market conditions, it would be difficult to dispose/let the existing operational properties, as there is limited demand for office accommodation in the town centre currently.

Therefore, the assumption was made that the Council office accommodation had to remain in the four operational buildings within the town centre as the staff contribute to the vitality and viability of Burnley town centre.

19. The recommendations fulfil our current requirement for the medium term and provide value for money and increased efficiency.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION

20. The Capital Programme provision for Accommodation Works in the current financial year was £258,900. £30,000 of this budget was spent on works to Padiham Town Hall, leaving a sum of £20,000, with £9,000 to be spent on improved lighting in the IS work area within Burnley Town Hall. There is currently an unallocated amount of £11,000 and the report on Access to Work Requirements in the Town Hall is recommending that £7,730 of this budget is allocated to these works. The remainder of the budget will be spent on minor accommodation moves in Council buildings.
21. £208,900 of the budget has been carried over to 2009/10 and will be used for these works recommended within this report. A further bid has been made for the full amount of these works to the Council's Capital Programme Board.
22. There will be overall Revenue Budget savings of £52,000; £22,000 Planning and

Environment and £30,000 Housing and Regeneration; hence the Capital sum required for these works could be funded from the Prudential Code of Borrowing.

If the proposed moves are not completed during 2009, adaptations will need to be made to the temporary offices currently occupied by Planning and Environment staff. The likely cost of these adaptations is in the region of £60,000.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

23. Consistent with Council Policies and Strategic Objectives.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

24. Chair of Better Services Scrutiny Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

25. Held in Property Consultancy.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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