

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE



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PORTFOLIO	RESOURCES
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**Accommodation Strategy 2008/09
Baseline Study and Implementation Plan**

PURPOSE

1. To provide Executive with an outline implementation plan for 2008-10 in accordance with the Accommodation Strategy Baseline Study 2008/9 ([appendix 1](#))
2. To seek approval from the Executive on expenditure from the Capital Programme Budget 2008/9 and 2009/10.

RECOMMENDATION

3. The Executive approves the outline implementation plan for 2008/10.
4. The Executive releases £35,000 from the Council's 2008/09 Capital Programme for the Stage 1 Implementation Plan (improvements to the access control system works within the Town Hall, alterations to the Information Services' and Members' accommodation in the Town Hall) and an estimated sum of £235,000 from the Council's 2009/10 Capital Programme for Stage 2 works within the Implementation Plan, as outlined in the report.
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 Order and accept the most advantageous tender for the 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 Outline Implementation Plan sets 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. The Outline Implementation Plan also sets out to meet our customers' needs and changing service agenda.
7. The framework of the proposal for the Stage 2 works, as shown in Appendix 2, was developed based on the aforementioned principles. Further detail works are required and it is recommended that the Plan 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. The security and access control within these buildings are reviewed periodically and improvement works have been identified in Burnley Town Hall. These proposed improvements within the Town Hall offer a better control of public access throughout the building and minimises security risks during out of hours period.
9. It is recommended that the improvements to the access control system are done in tandem with the Fire Evacuation works that will be undertaken in the Town Hall in 2008/09. This will avoid making changes to new installations and, more importantly, duplicating costs.
10. As part of the review, there was a clear need identified for alteration works to the Information Services' accommodation following a restructure and the Members' accommodation, which is not fit for purpose to meet the requirements of Members. Again this work can be undertaken in 2008/09 and be integrated with the other work in the Town Hall.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Background

11. The Accommodation Strategy Baseline Study 2008/09 is based on the core principle of optimising use of office assets to maximise service benefits and financial returns. Since the Accommodation Strategy was last reviewed in 2006, there have been several significant changes, particularly Padiham Town Hall, which has been converted from a Council operational building into an investment asset in the form of a Business and Community Centre.
12. The Outline Implementation Plan sets out the approach of delivering the vision and objectives of the Accommodation Strategy Baseline Study 2008/09.
13. There are two stages in Implementation Plan which are to be carried out over a period of two financial years:

STAGE 1 – 2008/09 (£35,000)

Security Work

- Improvements to the security and access control system within Burnley Town Hall
- An upgrade of the CCTV system and provision of appropriate signage.

The estimated cost of these works is a total sum of £20,000.

Alterations to Information Services' accommodation

Recently the Information Services Unit has undergone a restructure, whereby the Network & Operations Team has been dissolved.

The Office Systems Team has taken over the network and telecoms functions and now become the Infrastructure Support Team, and Business Systems Team has taken over the operations and service desk functions.

This restructure and merging of teams has resulted in a requirement for staff to move offices in order to facilitate knowledge/skills transfer; improved operational support and service delivery; and provide resilient and better cover during staff absence.

Nevertheless, the operations office is in need of upgrading as it has been identified in a recent health and safety audit that the lighting levels do not meet the minimum recommended standard. Power and network cabling works are also required to provide adequate infrastructure support. The Council is investing a sum of £150,000 to change the present network operation system from Novell to Microsoft and the proposed accommodation works would facilitate a smooth transfer. The estimated cost of works is £9,000.

Alterations to the current Members' Room

It is essential that Members have a suitable work area within the Town Hall. It is proposed that work be undertaken to the existing Members' Room and adjoining room to create a suitable work area for Members. This work will include the removal of partitions, new decoration / carpets and IT work, providing a work area that is fit for purpose. The estimated cost of works is £6,000. Further consultation with members will be carried out via the Members Structures & Support Working Group before the specification for the work is finalised.

STAGE 2 - 2009/10 (£235,000)

- Proposal as presented in Appendix 2.

Building	Level	Service Units
Parker Lane Offices	Ground Floor	Revenue & Benefits
	First Floor	Planning & Environmental Services Regeneration & Economic Development CECU
	Second Floor	Housing Elevate
Contact Centre	Ground Floor	Customer Services
	First Floor	Planning & Environmental Services

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

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.

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.

14. This solution was arrived at after undertaking an Option Appraisal and consultation with Management Team and Heads of Service.

15. 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.
16. 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.
17. 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.

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

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION

19. The original Capital Programme provision for Accommodation Works in the current financial year was £258,900. £208,200 of this sum remains unallocated.
20. £35,000 is required from the 2008/09 Capital Programme Accommodation Budget to undertake the Stage 1 works and the remainder of the budget will be carried forward to fund (in part) the Stage 2 works to be undertaken in 2009/10. A further bid for funding will be made from the Capital Programme for 2009/10.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

21. Consistent with Council Policies and Strategic Objectives.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

22. Better Services Scrutiny Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

23. Held in Property Consultancy.

FURTHER INFORMATION

**PLEASE CONTACT:
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