

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 JULY 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	OPERATIONAL ACCOMODATION REVIEW AND ASSET MANAGEMENT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR LOVELOCK	PORTFOLIO:	LEADERSHIP
SERVICE:	PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Policy Committee approved a revised Corporate Asset Management Plan at their meeting in July 2015. The Plan sets out the strategic direction for the management of assets. A number of tasks are set out within the plan. These include:

- Delivering on an active programme to dispose of assets;
- Completion of a Strategic operational property rationalisation review; and
- Implementation of an agreed proactive improvement programme focused on compliance and condition related priorities. Securing or facilitating health and safety related improvements.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to:

- Update members in relation to the disposal of assets.
- Present a proposed rationalisation strategy in relation to a number of operational assets focused on the following buildings (Phases 1A/ 1B):
 - Caversham Centre/Emmer Green
 - Civic Offices
 - The Avenue Centre
 - Amethyst Lane Family Support Centre
 - Yeomanry House
 - Henley Road Cemetery
 - Town Hall
- Present a proposed way forward, subject to further feasibility work in relation to the following assets (Phase 2):
 - 2-4 Darwin Close
 - 19 Bennet Road

- Hamilton Centre
 - Thamesbridge
 - Seek approval for an updated Compliance and Condition programme of works 2016-17 utilising the funds set out in the Council's approved Capital Programme.
 - Seek approval for an updated Corporate Asset Management Plan reporting on the work actioned since the adoption of the plan and the recommendations set out in this paper.
- 1.3 The total estimated cost of Phase 1A and B combined is circa £3m, and will potentially release capital receipts of circa £4.5 - £5m. In addition, there will be a significant revenue saving arising from the reduction in running costs and maintenance liabilities going forward. As a Grade II* listed building there is a degree of risk associated to the cost of the works at the Town Hall. The Council's approved Capital Programme provides in year funds of £1.5m which is sufficient to meet the cost estimates within 16/17. The balance of the funds to complete the project will be profiled in future revisions to the Council's capital programme.
- 1.4 The detailed costs for each of the buildings impacted by these proposals and their relevant running costs, maintenance budget allocations and future potential capital investment needs are set out in Appendix E and F. These appendices are provided as a Part 2 report given that most of the works require procurement and identifying a budget for such works may prejudice the Council's ability to secure value for money for the works.
- 1.5 An updated Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016 - 2019 and an updated Compliance and Condition programme are attached to this report for approval.

2.0 RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That Policy Committee:

- 2.1 Approves the relocation of the Births, Deaths and Marriages service from its current location at Yeomanry House, with ceremonial services taking place in the Town Hall and customer facing registrar functions moving to the Civic Offices.
- 2.2 Approves the proposed works to the Town Hall subject to gaining listed building consent.
- 2.3 Approves the proposed works to the Civic Offices, The Avenue Centre and Emmer Green.
- 2.4 Approves the proposed works to the Henley Road Cemetery subject to gaining planning permission.
- 2.5 Approves the principle of the disposal of the Amethyst Lane, Yeomanry House and Caversham Centre site subject to a marketing exercise and further report to this Committee.
- 2.6 Notes the further Phase 2 proposals in relation to Bennet Road, Darwin Close and the Hamilton Centre and endorses the approach to undertake further feasibility works.
- 2.7 Delegates formal spend approval for the projects listed in 2.1 - 2.4 of this report to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods in consultation

with the Chair of the Civic Board and the Heads of Finance and Legal and Democratic Services.

- 2.8 Notes and Approves the Compliance and Condition Programme 2016 - 2019 as report in Appendix D. The full programme is reported in Part 2 papers.
- 2.9 Approves the revised Corporate Assessment Management Plan 2016 -2019 incorporating the proposals set out in this report (Appendix C).
- 2.10 That the approved Capital programme be amended to reflect these approval in relation to Phases 1A and 1B and the costs of the feasibility works in relation to Phase 2.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 As reported elsewhere on this agenda the Council continues to face significant budget pressures following reduced Government funding, with the need to make further savings of £48m over the period 2016-2020.

3.2 The Council's approved Corporate Plan for 2016 - 2019 'Building a Better Borough' sets out the priorities for the Council which include remaining financially sustainable to deliver service priorities. Within this theme the plan refers to the need to identify further assets for disposal and secure significant capital receipts from property assets. Section 7 of the Corporate Plan refers to property and to the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan.

3.3 The Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) is set out in Appendix C. The plan is presented in light of on-going budget pressures and provides a number of themes and priorities. Taking these themes, and in light of the Corporate Plan and the budget position, there is a need to:

- Rationalise assets taking into account compliance and condition matters and service delivery
- Co-locate services to improve utilisation of buildings and service synergies
Optimise income opportunities
- Provide better service offer to our customers
- Reduce revenue costs
- Deliver Capital receipts
- Increase income targets

3.4 The proposals set out in this report cross a number of strategic themes and projects which include the need to: invest in and commercialise the use of the town hall; maintain and improve customer services; deliver an overall improvement in the condition of buildings and property; and maximise the opportunity to deliver energy efficiency and reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

4.0 ASSET DISPOSAL

4.1 In the last financial year, capital receipts amounting to £3.7m were achieved.

4.2 As set out in the budget savings proposals elsewhere on this agenda, the Capital Receipts Target for the next four years (2016/17 - 2019/20) is £20m.

- 4.3 The proposals set out in this report seek to dispose of:
- Amethyst Lane site - with the relocation of the Family Support Centre to the Civic Offices. The relocation of the Maples Day Centre to Rivermead Sports Centre is already programmed for later this year.
 - Yeomanry House - (Grade II Listed) with the relocation of the Birth, Deaths and Marriages service to the Town Hall, the Civic Offices and Henley Road Cemetery. The Berkshire Family History Service will be given assistance to find suitable premises.
 - The Caversham Centre - re-providing the New Directions service to other existing Council premises.

5.0 ACCOMODATION RATIONALISATION

5.1 A number of interrelated projects have been commenced since the approval of the Council's CAMP. The proposals arising from those projects are set out below in relation to each property. The starting position in relation to the maximisation of the use of property assets was to focus on Reading Borough Council's most prestigious building, the Town Hall & Museum.

5.1.1 Town Hall & Museum

The Town Hall & Museum is the Council's premier asset - a Grade II* listed building situated in the heart of the town. In November 2015, the Council's Policy Committee approved a budget savings proposal in relation to the Town Hall & Museum. The proposal focused on ensuring that the space within the building is effectively used to maximise income and increase the service offer from the building. In bringing forward the detailed proposals for the Town Hall & Museum a set of key principles were developed which include the need to increase income generation and maintain the Museum's capacity to support and deliver the Council's Abbey Revealed project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Recognising that the Museum is integral to the delivery plans for the Abbey Quarter project.

5.1.2 With increased income targets for the building, the use of the space available will need to be maximised and the overall offer improved. Increasing income would come from (in part):

- The relocation of the Berkshire Coroner's Service (the relocation took place in 2015);
- The relocation of additional services to the Town Hall and maximisation of the space. This would include making greater use of the former 3Bs bar.
- The generation of additional income through service development (additional £125k of income in 16/17 and £145k in 17/18).

5.1.3 A number of proposals to intensify the use of the Town Hall & Museum have been developed to respond to the agreed budget savings, including:

- The relocation of the ceremonial element of the Births, Deaths and Marriage Service to the Town Hall & Museum from Yeomanry House.
- Improved and enhanced café offer, increasing revenue streams. This will be achieved by the refurbishment of the former 3Bs Bar area and to take advantage of the fully pedestrianised and re-modelled Town Hall Square by providing outdoor seating.

- The provision of a dedicated Berkshire Coroner's inquest room within the Victoria gallery of the Town Hall & Museum to provide a more suitable location and to free up both the Silverthorne Room and Victoria Hall for commercial hire. This will require the relocation of the Victorian Classroom that is currently located within the Victoria Gallery (this is set out in more detail in section 5.2 below).
- To relocate the souvenir shop to a more prominent location in the building to increase footfall and commercial activity.
- To upgrade the facilities including the toilets and baby changing facilities.
- To relocate the reception area to help with way finding and improved customer service.
- Appropriate parking arrangements will be achieved by providing a drop off and pick up point in front of the Town Hall. To ensure that the parking arrangement can be made available to the wedding party, Highways officers have advised that the current arrangement of double yellow lines with the use of temporary signage indicating that the use of this space is dedicated to the wedding party would be sufficient to ensure the space is available when required. In addition to the above, ushers will also be in attendance to direct and manage the space and to ensure the wedding party are directed to the ceremony room.
- A further two spaces will be provided near to the Town Hall to enable wedding cars to park during the ceremony. Highway officers propose that wedding parties are provided with parking permits and that signage is erected to indicate the exclusive use of these spaces for the wedding party.
- An improved offer for schools, to encourage greater participation and increased visits, incorporating the facilities within the Town Hall & Museum and using the Abbey Gateway building as a new classroom experience.

5.1.4 The proposals outlined above will have a positive impact on, and add value to, the Town Hall & Museum's cultural offer whilst also not prejudicing the continued use of the Concert Hall. The proposals will require the relocation of the loan boxes from their current location in the ground floor gallery. The loan boxes facilitate museum objects being borrowed by schools and residential homes. The loan box scheme is popular and generates an income stream as well as delivering educational and well-being outcomes. It is the intention that the loan box scheme would continue but be managed in a different way.

5.1.5 The relocation of the ceremonial element of the Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service requires accommodation that delivers the right level of gravitas in order to meet the requirements of the Government's General Register Office (GRO) which oversees such functions. Officers have identified the ground floor gallery that currently holds the Museum loan box storage as a suitable location for the following reasons:

- The space is considered of a high quality in terms of architectural merit and historical significance, and which is likely to be attractive to users of the facility.
- The space can accommodate up to 31 guests within the ceremony room as required by the service.

- The space can accommodate the new superintendent register office, interview room, foyer waiting area and ceremony room all within the same area of the Town Hall & Museum.
- The ceremonial suite would be located on the ground floor and accessible to everyone and would allow for a continual flow of wedding parties through the building.
- The wedding parties can make use of the high quality spaces and exhibits within the Town Hall & Museum and surrounding area, including Forbury Gardens, for photos.
- Options are available to provide suitable parking for a wedding car at the main entrance to the building to ensure a sense of arrival appropriate for the occasion.
- Guests attending ceremonies will be able to take advantage of other services offered in the building, including catering and room hire to continue their celebrations. This offers a business opportunity to increase the number of wedding functions hosted at the Town Hall & Museum building on the synergies with current operations and reputation.
- The Town Hall benefits from its central location within the heart of Reading and access to excellent public transport links, including being a few minutes' walk from the railway station.

5.1.6 A plan showing the proposed changes is attached as Appendix A. The proposals represent a significant investment and upgrade of the existing facilities. A number of building compliance and condition matters would also be addressed at the same time, adding to the usability of the building. The works will require listed building consent. The Council's Compliance and Condition programme includes figures for some upgrade and improvement works. Some of these works can be completed in year as set out in the programme; some however would be postponed and completed as part of the broader refurbishment works as set out above. The costs set out in the compliance and condition work are in addition to the costs set out to achieve the above works.

5.2 Abbey Gateway

5.2.1 Restoration of the Abbey Gate is an integral component of the 'Abbey Revealed' project that has attracted significant Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant to enable the project to go ahead. The Council is providing significant levels of match funding, largely through the cumulative allocation of developer contributions from a number of planning section 106 agreements. Restoration works for the Abbey Gate are already planned and costed as part of the overall scheme and intended to be implemented relatively early in the overall programme.

5.2.2 In the approved HLF bid, the outlined intention was to let the whole of the 1st floor of the restored building commercially as office space to generate an annual rental income. This rental income was to be hypothecated to the ongoing maintenance costs of the restored buildings, ruins and surrounding area for a minimum 10 year period. This level of projected expenditure was thus cited in the bid as match funding from the Council and is integral to the overall financing of the scheme as agreed with and approved by HLF.

- 5.2.3 As set out above, officers have in parallel been considering how to best to configure space at the Town Hall & Museum to maximise use and income in the context of the wider budget pressures on the Council now and into the future. This work has identified the desirability of finding an alternative location for the Victorian Schoolroom which is currently in the Victorian Gallery on the 1st floor of the Town Hall & Museum.
- 5.2.4 The Victorian Schoolroom is a popular element of the Museum's educational offer, very well used by schools and is visited by approximately 4,000 children each year, generating £20k of income. It would clearly be desirable to retain the availability of this facility / service. However, finding a suitable alternative location within the existing Town Hall and Museum is problematic, especially given the pressure to accommodate additional functions and services into the building.
- 5.2.5 It is therefore proposed that the Victorian Schoolroom 'experience' is re-located to the 1st floor of the Abbey Gate building once restoration is complete. The offer may need to be adjusted to operate in this space but equally it is considered that there may be scope to further develop and broaden the educational offer. Abbey Gate was where Jane Austen went to school and it is considered that this additional historical and literary association would be attractive to schools and could add depth and interest to the educational programme. There are also significant benefits to the public from having access to this historic building, raising its profile and adding value to the wider Abbey Quarter and its multi-layered historic and heritage significance. The current schoolroom experience would be modified to take into account that Jane Austen was Georgian and not Victorian.
- 5.2.6 Whilst there are many public service benefits of bringing the Abbey Gate building into use for educational purposes, it also presents a commercial opportunity. As outlined above the Victorian Schoolroom currently generates a significant level of income and it is considered that marketing the offer from the restored Abbey Gate to schools could grow use and income from current levels. There are also opportunities for letting the space to other groups and users outside of school use. It is proposed that the education and commercial teams at the Town Hall and Museum work jointly to further develop the detail of the proposed use of the Abbey Gate building with a view to being able to market an activity programme in advance of the building becoming available for use.
- 5.2.7 It is acknowledged that a key drawback of using the 1st Floor of the Abbey Gate is the lack of disabled access that would be both extremely expensive to provide and potentially prejudicial to the fabric and use of the historic building and there is no certainty that Listed Building Consent would be achievable. The intention would therefore be for the education team to develop a clear menu of activities that could offer a parallel alternative experience for children and schools hosted at the Town Hall & Museum and/or linked into the activity / education programme for the Abbey Quarter more widely. Marketing this wider educational offer would make it very clear that the nature of the Abbey Gate building precludes providing full accessibility but would also ensure that there was awareness of the full

programme on offer that would provide comparable experiences accessible by all. An equalities impact assessment is attached in this regard.

5.2.8 Use of the Abbey Gate as described above will generate a net income stream that is no less than that achievable through leasing the building to a third party. The proposal would be to substitute this alternative income stream to provide match funding for the HLF project to honour the existing commitment to levels of match funding and to a high standard of maintenance for the restored Abbey Ruins, Abbey Gate and associated open-space and infrastructure. This proposal is now being discussed with HLF.

5.3 Yeomanry House

5.3.1 Yeomanry House (131 Castle Hill) is currently occupied by the Birth, Death and Marriages Service (BDM) and the Berkshire Family History Society. The Berkshire Coroner moved from the property to the Town Hall in 2015 leaving some of the building vacant. The property has a number of condition matters to address:

- i. the current Strong room which holds extensive public records and paper certification documents has run out of space and for the last 10 years the service has supplemented its storage capacity with safes. However, a recent structural survey strongly advised against installing further safes. Therefore, the service only has one year's worth of storage left.
- ii. access to the top floor is by a narrow set of stairs and due the building's listing, installing a lift is both challenging and costly and has therefore rendered the space unusable as office accommodation.
- iii. required investment to the exterior in the region of £70K, as well as improving weatherproofing which will reduce energy cost, thereby reducing premises costs, currently £73k per annum.
- iv. including the need to restore the wall to the front of the building. The decorative standard within the building is of a reasonable quality but it will need some updating in due course.

5.3.2 BDM consists of the following elements; registration and nationality checking, ceremonies and certification. In 2014/15, 610 civil marriages took place in Reading; 913 people attended citizenship ceremonies and over 4000 replacement birth certificates were issued. Officers have considered a number of options to deliver these elements of this service in new locations with the potential to dispose of Yeomanry House. These options have been developed in light of the priorities and themes set out above whilst working with the relevant officer team to ensure that there is a functional and customer focused service offer.

5.3.3 The options appraised included relocating the entire service to the Town Hall, moving part of the service to the Town Hall and part to the Civic Offices and moving the entire service to a new location with the Borough. As above, the ceremonial element is proposed to be relocated to the Town Hall.

5.3.4 The recommendation is that the registration and Nationality checking services are best located within the Civic Offices as this function requires a face to face service and town centre location. Space to accommodate this element of

BDM is not available at the town hall. This proposal will provide suitable accommodation that is both appropriate and commensurate with the requirements of both the General Register Office and the Service's needs. This will entail the provision of a discreet waiting area for bereaved families, interview rooms for the registrars and a discreet work area for registrars to discuss confidential matters and to store bonded documents in a secure environment.

- 5.3.5 An important element within the BDM service is the secure storage and production of certificates, this element of the service delivers significant revenue streams and is governed by the requirements of the GRO. The key elements of these requirements include the provision of a strong room that is a self-contained unit in the form of a box; the walls, ceiling and floor of brick or concrete construction which would remain intact in the event of fire. Materials used in the construction of, and finishing of, the repository should be non-combustible. The security door and frame should be of metal construction with fire resistance for a minimum of two hours. Moreover the site should not be liable to subsidence or flooding; there should be no heating pipes or water pipes and no windows.
- 5.3.6 In addition to the above, a space for certification staff to process requests for certificates must be located in close proximity to the strong room.
- 5.3.7 Officers have therefore undertaken a review of suitable locations and recommended the construction of a purpose built certificate production room and strong room that will meet the requirements of the GRO and offer sufficient space to continue to produce certificate for at least the next 10 years. The proposed location for this is discussed at 5.4 of this report.
- 5.3.8 In addition to Birth Deaths and Marriages, the Berkshire Family History Society (BFHS) are also located within Yeomanry House. The BFHS helps to meet the needs of those carrying out research into their family history across the UK and overseas - as well as those looking for ancestors in historic Berkshire. The research centre is free and open to all in the Reading area. The society currently occupies 1000sqft of Yeomanry House over two floors.
- 5.3.9 Officers have started to discuss future plans with the Society and have informed them of current thinking around the disposal of Yeomanry House. As part of our discussions, officers have offered assistance in finding suitable premises. Officers have also reassured the Society that they will be kept informed of developments. Officers will also ensure that a reasonable amount of notice is built into the programme to enable them to make a seamless transition from their current location.
- 5.3.10 The disposal of Yeomanry House would result in a reduction in revenue costs, a capital receipt and a reduction in future compliance and condition costs.

5.4 Henley Road Cemetery Proposal

- 5.4.1 Policy Committee at its meeting in November 2015 approved an extension of the cemetery subject to a number of conditions.

- 5.4.2 Officers have identified that the existing cemetery office is too small and not fit for purpose to provide an adequate service to customers and a satisfactory working environment for staff. The customer reception is very unsatisfactory both in appearance and size. It can accommodate only two members of the public at any one time, allowing for little or no privacy. This, coupled with the lack of a waiting room, results in any more than two customers having to wait outside. This is not considered an appropriate environment for customers who are often recently bereaved.
- 5.4.3 In addition to the above and as discussed in section 5.3 there is also a need to find a suitable location for the strong room and certification process associated with BDM service. Officers have therefore developed a proposal to construct a new building on the site of the dilapidated public toilet block close to the cemetery entrance. The new building will deliver fit for purpose office accommodation, waiting room, sales suite and public toilets for the cemetery and a strong room and certification area for BDM service. The certification service will be operated solely as a postal service with a range of delivery options and public will be able to order certificates online, by telephone and using a touchscreen kiosk at the civic. A secure register transfer system will be put in place in line with other secure document transfers protocols.
- 5.4.4 A plan attached as Appendix A provides details of the new building. The building would require planning consent.

5.5 Office Accommodation

- 5.5.1 A review of the current office estate has been undertaken to identify a number of assets which could be disposed of to generate a capital receipt. Through this work, five office buildings have been identified based on building condition, utilisation, location and potential for generating a capital receipt.
- 5.5.2 A number of options were worked through to determine the best disposal combination of these buildings taking into account how the Council can redeploy staff operating from these properties, secure best value in terms of investment for maintenance and capital investment to adapt remaining buildings. These works are outlined in the following sections.

5.6 Civic Offices

- 5.6.1 The refurbishment of the office was completed in the autumn of 2014 and the building occupied in December 2014. Prior to occupation extensive work to reduce storage needs was undertaken and a 3 to 2 work station ratio introduced for staff. The occupation of the Civic has been a success, delivering a fit for purpose environment for customers, members and officers with significantly reduced running costs. Since occupation feedback from users have been continually sought and further utilisation studies undertaken in relation to desk space and meeting room availability. Some 18 months after occupation a number of changes are proposed to the Civic building to further utilise the accommodation available.
- 5.6.2 The key changes proposed are:

- Works to accommodate the Family Contact Centre from Amethyst Lane including moving Multi Agency Sharing Hub (MASH) from current location on ground floor to a new area on the 1st floor.
- Works will then refit the ground floor space currently used by MASH to accommodate the Family Centre.
- Additionally, to increase capacity across the Civic Offices two areas of Roller Racking storage on the 1st and 2nd floors will be removed and replaced with new desk areas. The new desk areas will be fitted out with smaller desks to increase capacity in the building.

5.7 Emmer Green

5.7.1 Various services operate from this building including a Children's Centre, Youth Service, nursery, New Directions North and CAT touch down office space. In addition the building has been used for various community activities such as training and private hire (church/parties etc.).

5.7.2 The proposal is to retain the building to complete works to facilitate the use of this building more intensively while allowing the possibility for use by New Directions North who currently operate from the Caversham Centre. This is being reviewed and discussed with the service managers and no decision has yet been reached. A Children's Centre currently uses Emmer Green and this would continue in a part-time capacity under the proposals and wider Children's Centre review being undertaken by the service. Should New Directions current site at Caversham Centre become vacant a further paper seeking the disposal of this site would be presented to Policy Committee.

5.8 Avenue Centre

5.8.1 The Avenue Centre is occupied by a number of staff and services, including training facilities for staff. As part of the Council's Local Authority Council homes programme, land to the east of the centre currently being used as a car park will be developed for housing. One key driver for staff moves from this location is the requirement of car parking for teams which deliver services across the Borough based in this location, in particular social care teams. Staff at The Avenue Centre currently benefit from access to a temporary parking arrangement that will cease following the commencement of the Council House new build programme. Whilst not a requirement, officers have developed plans to regularise and increase the current parking area to the Meadway Sports Centre to minimise the impact of the loss of the temporary parking area. As a consequence some teams that require car parking will need to be moved to the Civic Offices where Car Parks A and B can still be used. This will result in Civic Office based staff who are more static in nature being moved to the Avenue Centre.

5.8.2 In addition works to facilitate the use of this building more intensively by office based staff are proposed as well as improvements to kitchenette areas and enhancements to break out space to allow building users to work flexibly to a 3:2 desk ratio.

5.9 Future proposals - 19 Bennet Road / Hamilton Centre / Darwin Close / Thamesbridge

5.9.1 Alongside the works outlined above, feasibility work is being undertaken on the potential for creating a staff satellite hub at 19 Bennet Road as part of a future phase of works. This would see the office accommodation improved, capacity increased and the storage provision enhanced and extended to allow the Museum Store and Modern Records (both currently at Darwin Close) to be accommodated. It is proposed that detailed discussions would take place with the Civic Board and reported to Policy Committee where necessary.

5.9.2 This work would provide a potential opportunity to review and dispose of both the accommodation at Hamilton Road and Darwin Close.

5.9.3 Thamesbridge House, which provides accommodation for teams including New Direction and CAT could also prove to be surplus to requirements in the longer term. However, this building is in a key location in relation to the provision of services by this Council and its partners. This will be addressed as part of Phase 2.

5.10 Energy efficiency and sustainability

5.10.1 As part of the refurbishment of the Civic Offices, a number of energy efficiency measures were introduced to the building including the installation of solar panels to the roof. In all cases, the proposed works set out above would continue to seek to maximise energy efficiency, where possible generate power and reduce CO2 emissions in line with the ambitions and targets set out in the Council's Carbon Plan.

5.11 Programme, Risk Management & Governance

5.11.1 The proposed governance structure is outlined within Appendix A.

5.11.2 The risk register for the programme has been developed at a strategic programme level.

5.12 **Other options considered:**

5.12.1 A number of alternative options were considered as part of the options for the relocation of the Births Deaths and Marriage service. A number of assets across the Borough was considered including:

- Mansion House for ceremonies
- Central Library for registration and certification
- Royal Berkshire Hospital - registration
- Cemeteries - certification
- Civic - certification
- Civic - registration

5.12.2 The preferred option given the status and gravitas of the building and the need to maximise its use was to relocate the ceremonial element of the service to the Town Hall.

5.12.3 The key drivers for the maximisation of the use of property assets was focused on the full use of the Town Hall, the release of assets to generate a capital receipt and reduction in running costs.

6.0 UPDATED CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

6.1 Attached as Appendix C is a review of the Council Corporate Asset Management Plan and revised and updated plan for 2016 - 2019 taking into account the progress to date against the identified priorities.

7.0 UPDATED CORPORATE COMPLIANCE AND CONDITION SCHEDULE

7.1 Attached as Appendix D is a report in relation to the Compliance and Condition works to Corporate Buildings.

7.2 This report sets out works completed in 2015/16 and the top-line allocation of the £2,500,000 provision in the 2016/17 Capital Programme for condition/compliance and priority health and safety works to corporate buildings, as put forward by the Land and Property Group (L&P), on the advice of the Council's Corporate Property Services Manager and Health & Safety Manager.

8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

8.1 Remaining financially sustainable to deliver service priorities' is a theme within the Corporate Plan.

9.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

9.1 Any changes to service provision resulting from these works will be widely advertised and sign posted across media outlets. All works subject to planning or listed building consent will include public consultation.

9.2 In relation to staff engagement, services are being consulted on the proposed staff moves and changes to working practices, notably around the agreed corporate flexible working protocols.

9.3 The Programme Manager and members of the Business and Organisational Change Team also continue to work with individual teams and to regularly update directorate management teams.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and attached as Appendix B.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 A new Registration Scheme setting out Registration functions and service structure will be presented to the General Register Office for

approval. Procurement will be in line with the Council's standing orders and contract procedure rules.

12.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The financial implications are set out in summary as a Part 2 report.

13.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 None.

LIST OF APPENDICES ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT:

A - Presentation containing:

- Cemetery proposals
- Town Hall plans
- Timeline office review and key milestones
- Proposed governance structure

B - Equalities Impact Assessment

C - Corporate Asset Management Plan

D - Compliance and Condition Programme report (appendices form Part 2 papers names Appendix Gi and Gii).

Part 2 Appendices:

E - Investment and Drives Summary

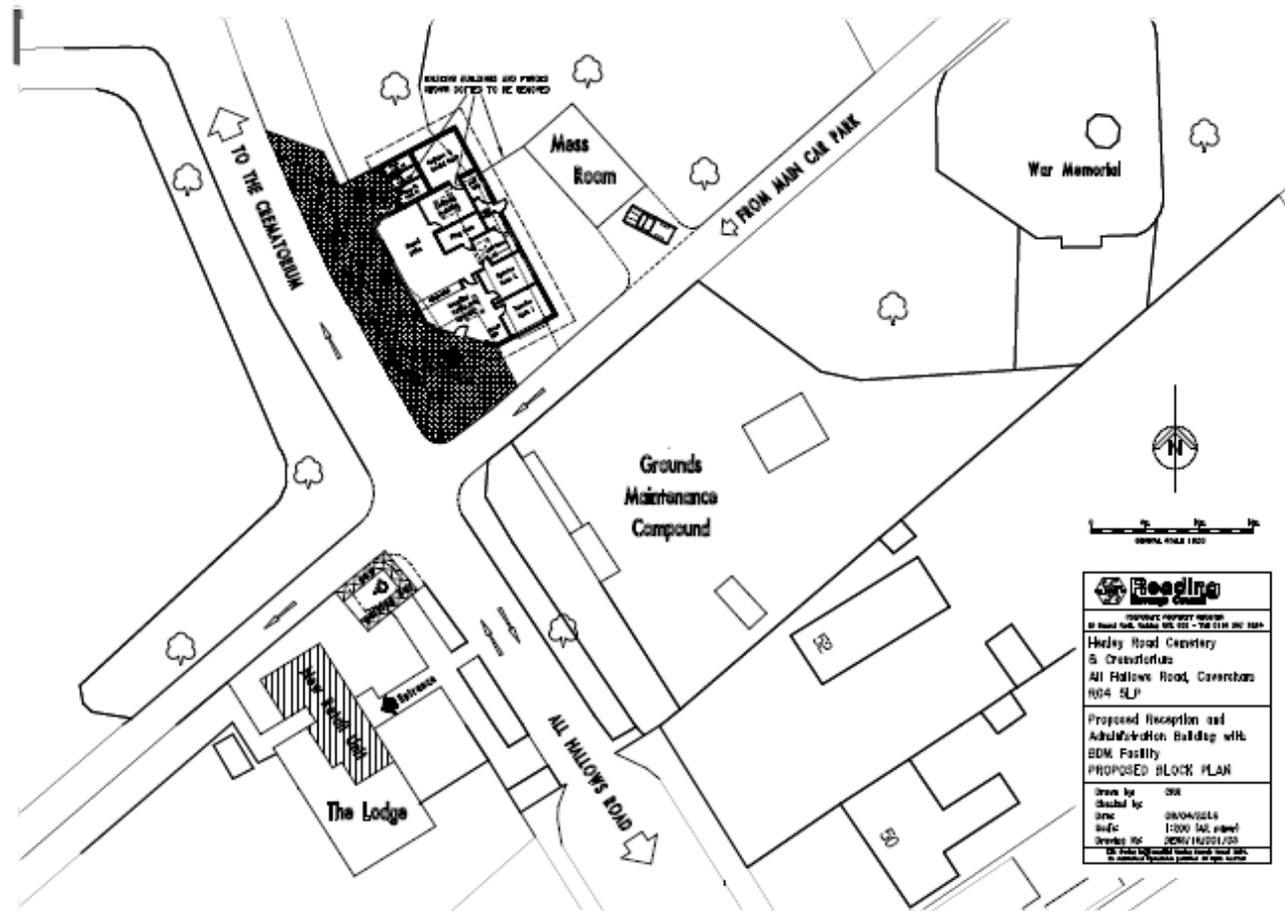
F- Revenue and Savings Summary

G- Detailed Compliance and Condition Programme (i) 2015/2016 and (ii) 2016/2017

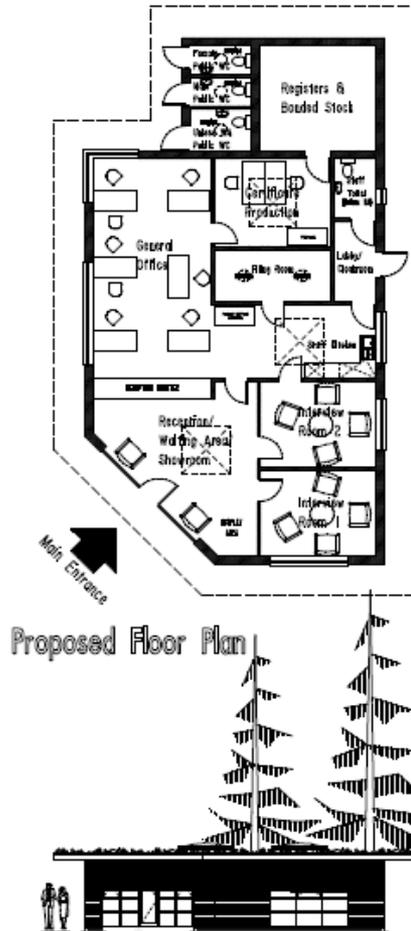
Property Rationalisation Programme Summary Policy Committee

Phase 1B | Cemetery Proposal

Slide 2 of 8



Phase 1B | Cemetery Proposal



Proposed Materials

- ① Brickwork Clay Facing Bricks, colour TBA
- ② Windows & Doors: Polyester Powder Coated Aluminium, colour TBA
- ③ Flat Roof Covering: Extensive Green Roof System with native species grasses, hardy wild flower mixtures and perennials
- ④ Demed Rooflights with Clear Polycarbonate Double Glazing
- ⑤ Stainless steel clad soft core timber door (Public Toilets only)

Schedule of Accommodation

- Unisex WA Public Toilet = 3.68m²
- Female Public Toilet = 2.53m²
- Male Public Toilet = 2.53m²
- Reception/Waiting Area = 31.94m²
- General Office = 38.00m²
- Filing Room = 8.80m²
- Staff Kitchen/Ancillary Space = 17.66m²
- Interview Room 1 = 14.52m²
- Interview Room 2 = 14.52m²
- Lobby/Queue = 4.92m²
- Staff Toilet (Unisex WA) = 3.68m²
- Registers & Bonded Stock = 18.00m²
- Coffin Production = 14.85m²

GEA = 202.00m²



Proposed North Elevation



Proposed East Elevation

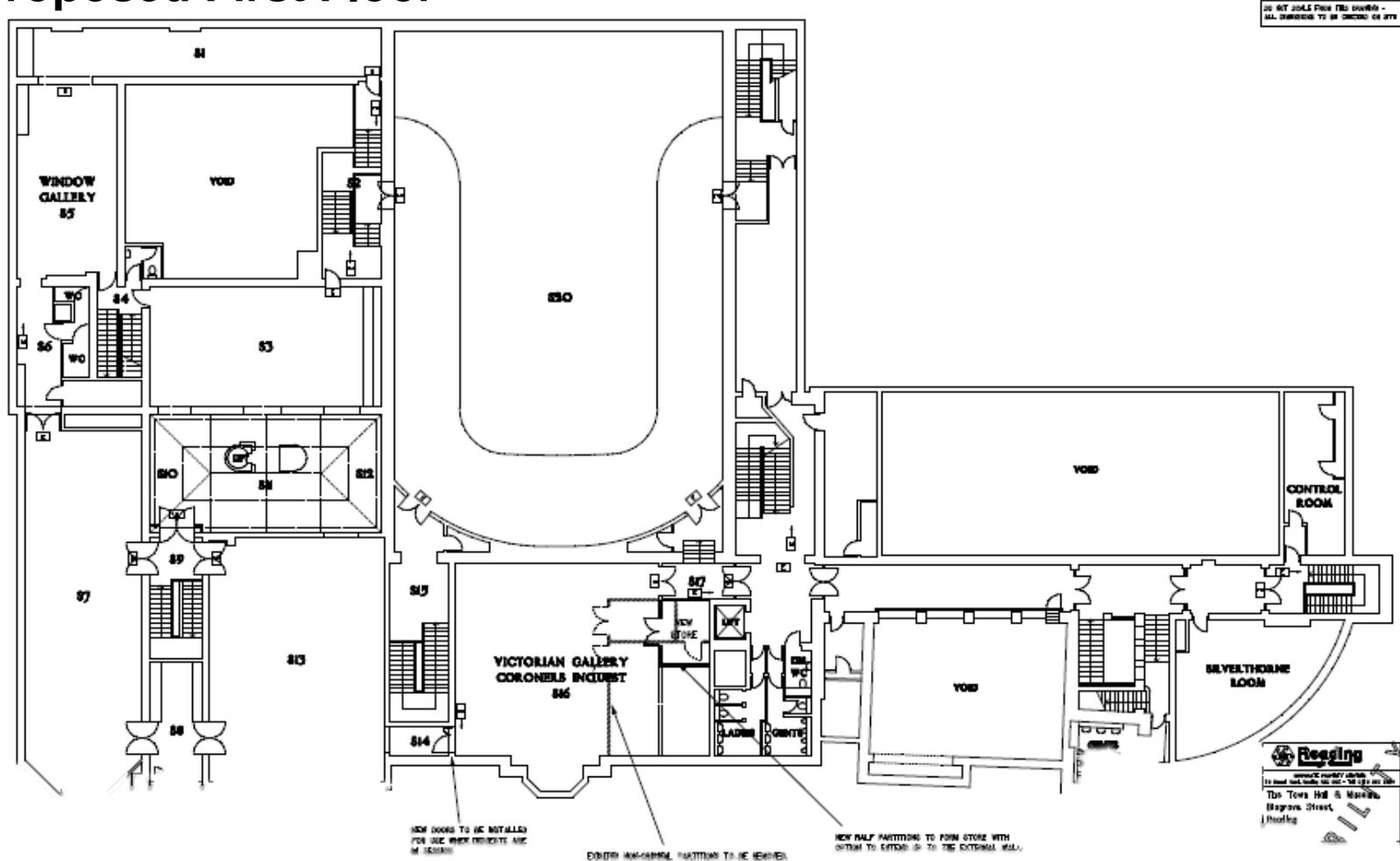


REVISION IS ADDED AREAS FOR CERTIFICATE PRODUCTION AND REGISTERS & BONDED STOCK OR (10.05.2016)
 REVISION AT DECREASED OFFICE & RECEPTION AREAS TO REDUCE FOOTPRINT OF BUILDING BY APPROX. 10sqm. ORR 03.05.2016

<p>Reading Borough Council</p> <p>SEPARATE PROPERTY SERVICES 18 PRATT ROAD, TROSBY HILL, WOKING, SURREY GU24 0JH</p>
<p>Henley Road Cemetery & Crematorium All Hallows Road, Caversham RG4 5LP</p>
<p>Proposed Reception and Administration Building with BDM Facility</p> <p>(CASUALTY PLAN - FLOOR 3)</p>

Phase 1B | Town Hall

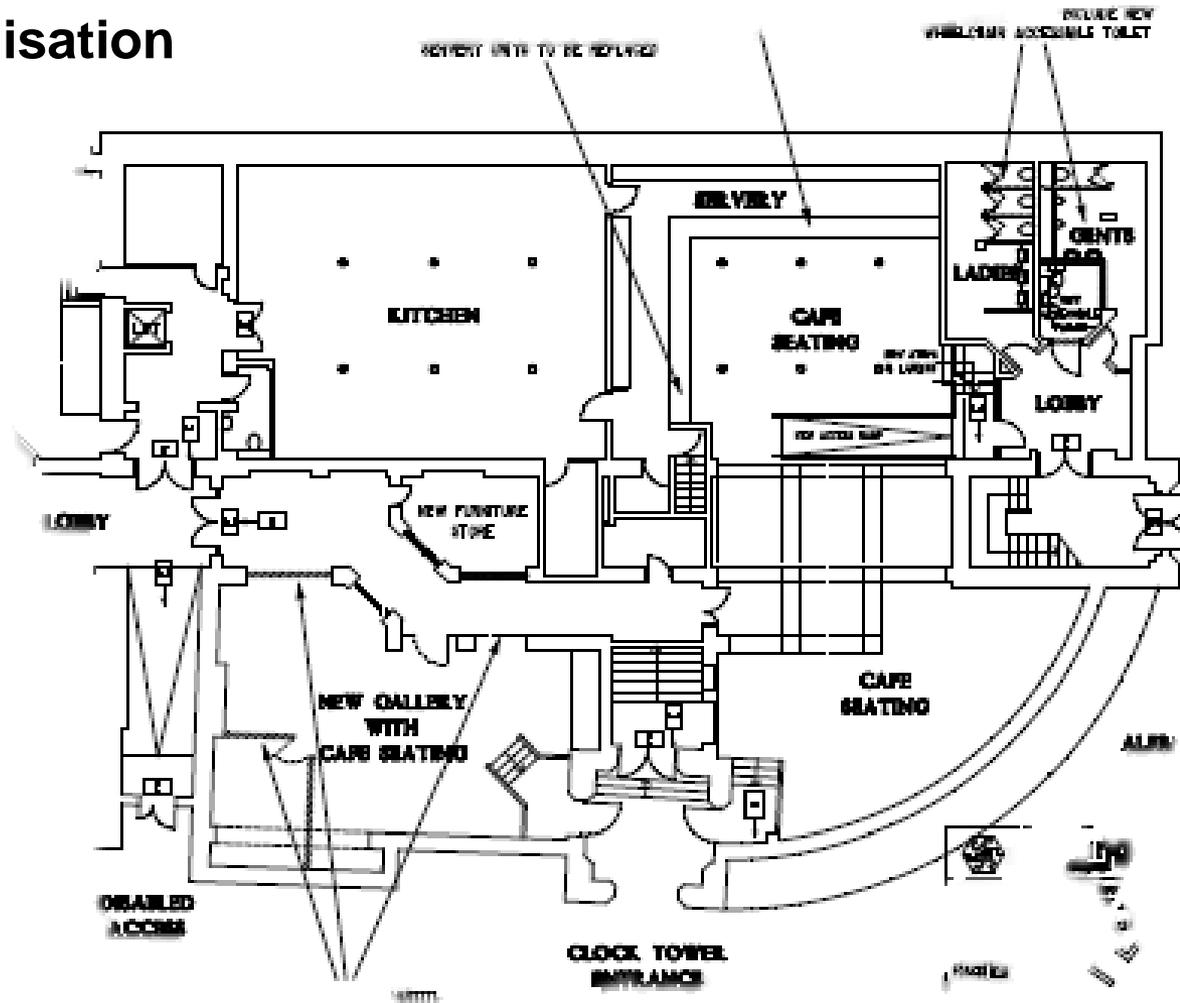
Proposed First Floor



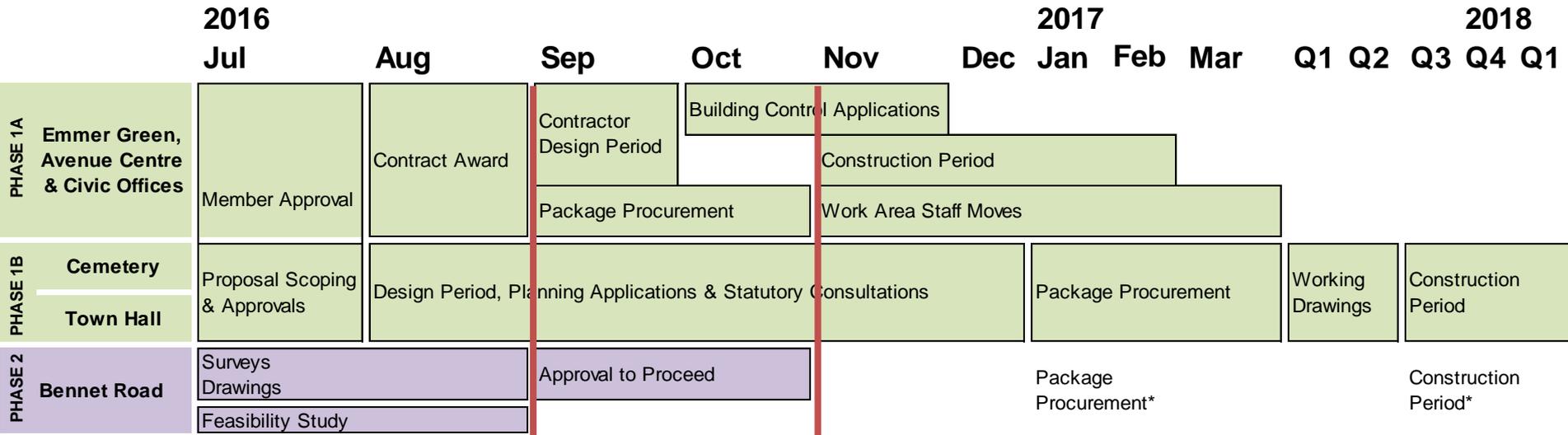
Phase 1B | Town Hall

Slide 6 of 8

Commercialisation

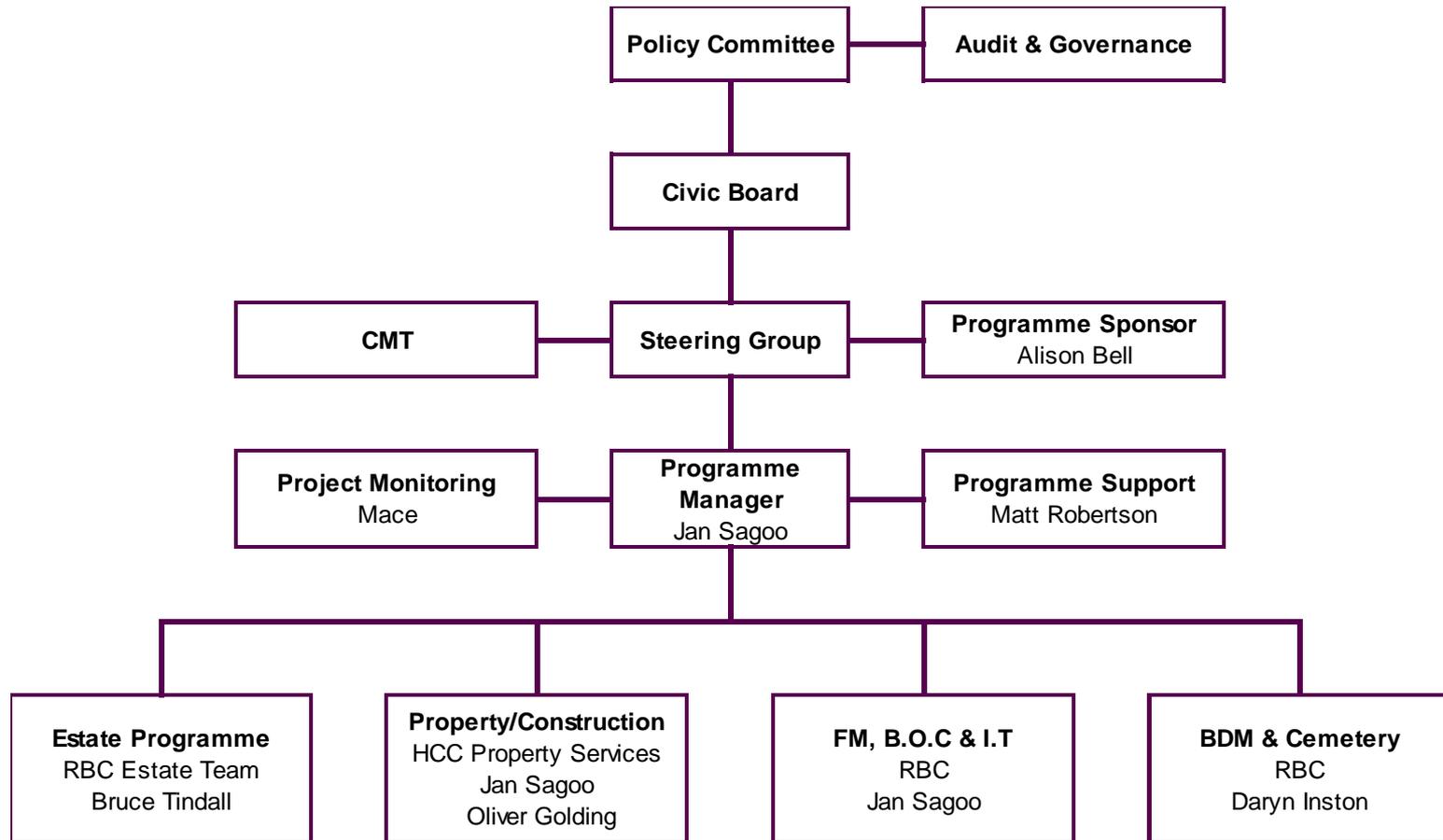


Programme Delivery



Review & approval stages

* If given approval to proceed



Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed: Operational Accommodation Review and Asset Management

Directorate: DENS

Service: Planning Development and Regulatory Services

Name and job title of person doing the assessment

Name: Reubena Ovuorie

Job Title: Principal Property Development

Date of assessment: 29th June 2016

Scope your proposal

What is the aim of policy or new service/ Changes are you proposing

The Council continues to face significant budget pressures following reduced Government funding, with the need to make further savings and generate additional income.

The Council's approved Corporate Plan for 2016 - 2019 'Building a Better Borough' sets out the priorities for the Council which include remaining financially sustainable to deliver service priorities. Within this theme the plan refers to the need to identify further assets for disposal and secure significant capital receipts from property assets. Section 7 of the Corporate Plan refers to property and to the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan.

The Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) set outs the need to:

- Rationalise assets taking into account the compliance and condition matters and service delivery
- Co-locate services
- Optimise income opportunities
- Provide better service offer to our customers
- Reduce revenue costs
- Deliver Capital receipts
- Increase income targets

The proposals set out a number of strategic themes and projects which include the need to: invest in and commercialise the use of the town hall; maintain and improve customer services; deliver an overall improvement in the condition of buildings and property; and maximise the opportunity to deliver energy efficiency and reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

These proposals would be delivered primarily through a series of accommodation rationalisation to co-locate services, reduce revenue costs and disposal of property assets that require significant investments to improve.

Property assets listed below have been identified for disposal including the accommodation ration required to achieve this: required to deliver vacant building

1. Amethyst Lane site
 - Relocation of the Family Support Centre to the Civic Offices.
 - Relocation of the Maples Day Centre to Rivermead Sports Centre is already programmed for later this year (not assessed in this review).
2. Yeomanry House - (Grade II Listed)
 - Relocation of the Birth, Deaths and Marriages service to the Town Hal, the Civic Offices and Henley Road Cemetery.
 - To continue discussions with Berkshire Family History Service regarding their relocation and to offer our assistance in finding suitable premises.
3. Caversham Centre
 - Relocation of New Directions North to Emmer Green or an alternative RBC site.

For the Equality Impact Assessment it has been agreed the initial scoping exercise will be completed for all projects in this proposal. Then a full Equality Impact

Assessment undertaken for only those projects assessed to have an impact on any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation)

This scoping exercise covers:

- The relocation of birth deaths and marriages
- The relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to the Abbey Gate
- The closure of New Directions and its relocation to Emmer Green or an alternative RBC site
- The relocation of the family centre to the Civic.
- The increased utilisation of the civic
- Avenue Centre

Proposed Changes	
<p>Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different buildings</p>	<p>The Registration Service Act 1953 places a duty on each council to prepare a local "scheme" for the approval of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to appoint a "Proper Officer". The Scheme commits the local authority to comply with the service delivery standards contained in The General Register Office's Code of Practice</p> <p>Taken together, the Scheme and the Code provide a formal governance agreement between the Registrar General and local authorities, the framework of which enables the local authority to plan, develop and deliver a registration service which meets the needs of the local community.</p> <p>The Code of Practice also reflects the need for a customer focused, output driven local registration service, one which is delivered sensitively, economically and efficiently to the satisfaction of users.</p> <p>The General Registers Office (GRO) is the competent authority that ensures local authorities are compliant with the Registration Scheme and Code of Practice.</p>

Reading Registration Service

The Registration Service is currently located in Yeomanry House (YH) which a grade II listed building circa built in 1890's.

The principal outputs from the service are: registrations of births, deaths and marriages, marriage & Civil partnership notices and ceremonies, replacement Certificates, Nationality checking and citizenship ceremonies.

In relation to records and registers the principal outputs are: safe and secure custody of records and registers which must be kept in a strong room or vault.

Current Challenges at YH

YH is no longer fit to deliver the full functions of the Registration service. The Strong room is full to capacity with registers and to continue to maintain these legal records securely, a number of safes have been purchased over time and housed in various rooms at YH. The latest structural survey assessed the building to be unsuitable to accept any further large safes. Each year registrations generate a requirement of 2 metres in shelf space.

In addition, Yeomanry House isn't Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. In order to comply, a lift would need to be inserted into the building and this would be difficult due to its listing. The public are able to access the interview rooms on the first floor albeit with some difficulty on occasion. Where there is a requirement for a registrar to come downstairs because a customer is unable to use the stairs, the registration is often done by hand and then keyed-in upstairs while the family wait. This is solution is inefficient and does not provide the best customer service.

The operational and maintenance costs for YH are high due to the age of this building and there is also limited scope to undertake cost effective refurbishments as a result of its listed status.

Proposed Changes

The Council proposes (Subject to approval) to move this service to more suitable buildings. The relocation to these building is expected to have minimal impact on the customer. From a customer's perspective, access to most of the registration service would remain unchanged given these are arranged by appointment. The Council will no longer offer a face-to-face replacement certificate service and this function will be operated solely as a postal service with a range of delivery options and public will be able to order certificates online, by telephone and using a touchscreen kiosk at the civic. A secure register transfer system will be put in place in line with other secure document transfers protocols. A register repository and strong room will also accommodate a Certificate production centre, all of which will be

	<p>located at a remote location.</p> <p>Following a comprehensive review of buildings suitable for the Registration Service, it is being proposed to move the registration service into three separate buildings.</p> <p>Proposed Buildings</p> <p>The Registration Service would be moved from YH and split across three separate buildings within Reading.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town Hall - The ceremony room would be relocated to the Town Hall. A dedicated ceremony room will be created for all ceremonies as the building architecture and décor lends itself to the grandeur required for a ceremony room and similar to the interior at YH. Attesting of notices for marriages & civil partnerships will also be done at the Town Hall. Although the ceremony room would be located on the ground floor, there are also lifts in the Town Hall for anyone who wants to access other parts of the Town Hall or take photos. <p>The building is located in the town centre and easily accessible by public transport. Paid car parking facilities are available for private cars across the town centre. Disabled parking is also available in front of the Town Hall</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Civic Offices - Is the main office for all of RBC operations. All administrative and customer facing functions of the Registration Service will be delivered from this office within a dedicated area for Registration Service with the right ambience and privacy to deal with bereaved customers sensitively and handle confidential discussions with any customer. The area for the Registration service would be located on the ground floor and DDA compliant for all customers. <p>The Civic Offices is located in the town centre and easily accessible by public transport, with paid car parking facilities available for cars across the town centre. The Civic also has dedicated visitors' parking which can be used by disabled customers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. New Cemetery Office - A purpose built safe and secure strong room would be constructed as part of the new cemetery office. This strong room would have sufficient space to accommodate existing and future register records. It will not be visited by any customer using the registration service. Access into the strong room is restricted to Registration staff only; it would be a ground floor building and DDA compliant for members of staff.
<p>Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to</p>	<p>The Council has been considering how to best configure space at the Town Hall & Museum to maximise use and income in the context of the wider budget pressures on the Council now and into the future. This work has identified the desirability of finding an alternative location for the Victorian Schoolroom which is currently in the Victorian Gallery on the 1st floor of the Town Hall & Museum.</p>

<p>the Abbey Gate</p>	<p>The Victorian Schoolroom is a popular element of the Museum’s educational offer, very well used by schools and is visited by approximately 4,000 children each year. It would clearly be desirable to retain the availability of this facility / service. However, finding a suitable alternative location within the existing Town Hall & Museum is problematic, especially given the pressure to accommodate additional functions and services into the building.</p> <p>Proposed Relocation</p> <p>It is proposed the Victorian Schoolroom experience is re-located to the 1st floor of the Abbey Gate building once restoration is complete. The Abbey Gateway is the only surviving Gate of Reading Abbey, the other four gates having been completely destroyed. It contains many layers of architectural history and is an interesting example of medieval Abbey Gate architecture and is a good example of a George Gilbert Scott restoration. The original 12th century rounded inner arch and the 13th century medieval style pointed outer arches are enclosed in 19th century restoration work and dotted with 20th century examples of conservation repairs.</p> <p>The repair and conservation of the Abbey Gate is part of the ‘Reading Abbey Revealed’ project. The aim is to bring the Gate back into a sustainable use that secures its long term protection as a nationally important building of historical and architectural interest. It is owned by Reading Borough Council, a Grade I Listed building and Scheduled Monument and has been on the English Heritage/Historic England - Heritage at risk register since 2011.</p> <p>Issues with Disabled Access</p> <p>It is acknowledged that a key drawback of relocating the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to the 1st Floor of the Abbey Gate is the lack of disabled access. The provision of disabled access has been assessed by Historic England and Reading Planning Authority as part of the planning approval process. The cost of such a conversion and the significant loss of historic fabric that work will require were deemed unjustified. Due to nature of the building of being a Grade I listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument as well as its relative small size, it was therefore concluded it would not be practical or appropriate to make Abbey Gate fully accessible.</p> <p>To ensure a ‘schoolroom’ experience is accessible to everyone. The intention would be for the Museum education team to develop a clear menu of activities that could offer a parallel alternative experience for children and schools hosted at the Town Hall & Museum and/or linked into the wider activity / education programme for the Abbey Quarter more widely. Marketing this wider educational offer would make it very clear that the nature of the Abbey Gate building precludes providing full accessibility.</p>
<p>Closure of New Directions North</p>	<p>The New Directions service is part of Reading Borough Council’s (RBC) Directorate of Environment & Neighbourhood Services (DENS) and is externally grant funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). The service provides adult education in five RBC owned centres (two</p>

<p>building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre or an alternative RBC site</p>	<p>designated learning centres in Caversham & Whitley and three shared premises) plus a number of outreach locations in the borough for example Children’s Centres.</p> <p>New Directions vision is ‘To support individuals to achieve their personal aims and aspirations whether they are to gain employment, improve their skills or to help them be part of their community’.</p> <p>They provide best value, high quality adult and family learning, which meets the needs and aspirations of each individual in the local community’. The service will achieve these by working with a range of organisations to provide high quality learning opportunities to those most in need.</p> <p>The service has established the Reading Community Learning Network (RCLN) members are providing targeted and specialist provision in Reading. The designated learning centre in Caversham is located in the Caversham Centre building which has been identified by the Council’s asset review to be in poor condition and in need of major refurbishment.</p> <p>The service currently has 471 learners enrolled from Caversham and surrounding wards who are studying qualifications. A further 157 non-qualification bearing courses ran from the centre in 2015-16. Classes include supported learning classes for adults with additional needs in subjects such as art, craft and pottery.</p> <p>The service currently has 327 learners enrolled who have declared additional needs. Around 40% of learners are BME, around 25% of learners are male, around 10% are aged 65+, around 60% of learners are from the most deprived areas of Reading.</p> <p>In addition, the Reading branch of the WEA (Workers Educational Association), also deliver a substantial number of classes from the Caversham Centre. This partnership contributes to New Directions delivery of contractual targets.</p> <p>As part of the Council’s strategy to manage budgetary pressures, a proposal is being considered to close Caversham Centre due to its poor condition, dispose this property and relocate the New Direction North service to another building. This proposal is being discussed with service managers.</p> <p>Proposed Relocation</p> <p>The proposal is to relocate the service to Emmer Green Children’s Centre or an alternative RBC site. The actual building is yet to be decided. Possible relocation to Emmer Green would provide an accessible and functional building in which to provide this function.</p>
<p>Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic</p>	<p>The Family Support Centre is currently located in Amethyst House and works with families and children.</p>

Offices	<p>Proposed Changes</p> <p>The proposal is to relocate the Family Support Centre from Amethyst House to the ground floor of the Civic Offices. Works will be undertaken to refit the ground floor to provide accommodate that is fit for purpose and child friendly.</p>
Increased Utilisation of the Civic Offices	<p>The Civic Offices is the main office for all of RBC operations. The refurbishment of the office was completed in the autumn of 2014 and the building occupied in December 2014. Prior to occupation extensive work to reduce storage needs was undertaken and a 3 to 2 work station ratio introduced for staff. The occupation of the Civic has been a success, delivering a fit for purpose environment for customers, members and officers with significantly reduced running costs. Since occupation feedback from users have been continually sought and further utilisation studies undertaken in relation to desk space and meeting room availability. Some 18 months after occupation a number of changes are proposed to the Civic building to further utilise the accommodation available.</p> <p>Proposed Changes</p> <p>The Family Support Centre would be relocated from Amethyst Lane to the ground floor. The Multi Agency Sharing Hub (MASH) moved from its current location on the ground floor to a new area on the 1st floor. Works will be undertaken to refit the ground floor space currently used by MASH to accommodate the Family Centre.</p> <p>Additionally, to increase capacity across the Civic Offices two areas of Roller Racking storage on the 1st and 2nd floors will be removed and replaced with new desk areas. The new desk areas will be fitted out with smaller desks to increase capacity in the building.</p> <p>The Civic Offices is located in the town centre, easily accessible by public transport, with paid car parking facilities available for cars across the town centre. The Civic Offices also has dedicated visitors parking which can be used be disabled services users.</p>
Avenue Centre	<p>The Avenue Centre is occupied by a number of staff and services, including training facilities for staff. As part of the Council's Local Authority Council homes programme, land to the east of the centre currently being used as a car park will be developed for housing. One key driver for staff moves from this location is the requirement of car parking for teams which deliver services across the Borough based in this location, in particular social care teams. Staff at The Avenue Centre currently benefit from access to a temporary parking arrangement that will cease following the commencement of the Council House new build programme. Whilst not a requirement, officers have developed plans to regularise and increase the current parking area to the Meadway Sports Centre to minimise the impact of the loss of the temporary parking area. As a consequence some teams that require car parking will need to be moved to the Civic Offices where</p>

	<p>Car Parks A and B can still be used. Disable parking is also available in Car Park B. This will result in Civic Office based staff that are more static in nature being moved to the Avenue Centre.</p> <p>In addition works to facilitate the use of this building more intensively by office based staff are proposed as well as improvements to kitchenette areas and enhancements to break out space to allow building users to work flexibly to a 3:2 desk ratio.</p>
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Who will benefit from this proposal and how?	
Proposed Changes	Who Benefits and How?
<p>Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different Buildings</p>	<p>Customers - The new purpose built strong room would ensure residents' registration records can continue to be stored safely and securely.</p> <p>The dedicated Registration service area in the Civic Office would be located on the ground floor only, therefore fully DDA compliant.</p> <p>RBC - The relocation allows RBC to meet its obligation under 'The Registration Service Act 1953' and Code of Practice which requires the need for a customer focused, output driven local registration service which is delivered sensitively, economically and efficiently to the satisfaction of users.</p>
<p>Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to the Abbey Gate</p>	<p>English Heritage/Historic England - Guarantees and secure and long term futures Abbey Gate listed on the Heritage at risk register since 2011 by the English Heritage</p> <p>Reading Museum - Provides an opportunity to expand the Museum educational offer to schools and attract more visitors.</p> <p>Schools and Children who visit the Victorian schoolroom - An opportunity for a broad range of educational programmes around the Abbey Quarter for schools to choose from and children to participate.</p>
<p>Closure of New Directions North</p>	<p>RBC New Directions Service - Relocation provides an opportunity to consolidate to a single site and reduce facilities</p>

building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre or an alternative RBC site	costs. With the flexibility to hire other premises on an ad-hoc basis to meet demand. Service Users (Students) - Provides training facilities that is fit for purpose.
Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic Offices	Service Users (Families and Children) - Improves accommodation and good access for travel due to the town centre location. RBC Staff - Improves accommodation and access to Civic reception services.
Increased Utilisation of the Civic Avenue Centre	RBC Staff - Improves standard of accommodation for those staff relocated to the Civic offices. RBC Staff - Maintains the car parking provision for those staff where the use of a car is essential for their work.

What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?	
Proposed Changes	Expected Outcomes and for Whom?
Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different Buildings	RBC Registration Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide suitable accommodation to deliver the Registration service to customers and enable RBC to meet its obligations.
Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to the Abbey Gate	Reading Museum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The educational offer that may need to be adjusted to operate in this space but equally it is considered that there may be scope to further develop and broaden the offer. Abbey Gate was where Jane Austen went to school and it is considered that this additional historical and literary association would be attractive to schools and could add depth and interest to the educational programme delivered by the Museum. Increased public access to Abbey Gate, raising its profile and adding value to the wider Abbey Quarter and its multi-layered historic and heritage significance. English Heritage/Historic England <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inclusion of Abbey Gate to the museum's educational programme would ensure its sustainable use and

	<p>long term protection.</p> <p>Schools and Children who visit Victorian Schoolroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enhanced programme of activities delivering a diverse range of educational based activities. Taking advantage of the literary association.
Closure of New Directions North building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre or an alternative RBC site	<p>RBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of a capital receipt from the disposal of Caversham Centre. • Utilise spare capacity within the building. • Improve the quality of the building while maintaining a Children’s Centre function. • Exploring options to accommodate New Directions North?
Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic Offices	<p>RBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To free the current building (Amethyst Lane) occupied by Family Support Centre. • To deliver a capital receipt from the disposal of Amethyst House.
Increased Utilisation of the Civic	<p>RBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate services within the building to allow additional occupancy to be achieved. • Increase the building capacity. • Improve Furniture fixtures and equipment (FF&E) provision to enhance user use of the building. • Works to facilitate Family Support Centre moving into Civic, to free Amethyst Lane for disposal.
Avenue Centre	<p>RBC Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of kitchenettes • Increase the provision of break out space to facilitate flexible working practices • Increase the building capacity and implement corporate protocols on flexible work style.

Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?	
Proposed Changes	Stakeholders and what they want
Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different Buildings	<p>GRO - Is the competent authority responsible for monitoring the compliance of local authorities with 'The Registration Service Act 1953' and the Code of Practice. GRO must be satisfied that all three proposed buildings meet the acceptable delivery standards for a Registration service.</p> <p>Customers - Services users require a local service where they register a birth, death or marriage which is accessible to all. Provision of a discreet waiting area within the registration service area for recently bereaved users to register any death.</p> <p>Feedback from customer groups is positive, the lack of lift has been the only concern expressed by customers. The service positively meets the needs of certain religious groups who require weekend registrations.</p> <p>RBC - To meet the obligation placed on local authorities under the 'The Registration Service Act 1953' and the Code of Practice.</p>
Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to the Abbey Gate	<p>English Heritage/Historic England - The Sustainable use and long term protection of the Abbey Gate.</p> <p>Schools and children who visit the Victorian schoolroom - Continued access and availability of the Victoria schoolroom experience as an educational activity.</p> <p>Reading Museum - for children to continue to visit the Museum</p> <p>RBC Access Officer - Guarantees that an alternative 'schoolroom' experience would be developed for those unable to access Abbey Gate.</p>
Closure of New Directions North building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre or an alternative RBC site	<p>Service Users (Students) - Continuity of provision and retaining good accessibility to public transport and provision of car parking spaces.</p> <p>Workers Educational Association (WEA) - Continued partnership with New Directions and facilities at the new location to deliver training services.</p>
Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic Offices	<p>RBC Staff - Better accommodation and access to good facilities.</p> <p>Services Users (Families and Children) - Good links to travel and child friendly meeting spaces that are safe and</p>

	secure.
Increased Utilisation of the Civic	RBC Staff - Better accommodation
Avenue Centre	RBC Staff - Better accommodation and car parking provision including disabled parking.

Assess whether an EglA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? (Think about your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.)

Proposed Changes	Yes or No
Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different Buildings	No
Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom to Abbey Gate	Yes - There is no disability access in Abbey Gate due to nature of the building being a Grade I listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument as well as its relative small size. The cost of such a conversion and the significant loss of historic fabric that work will require were deemed unjustified by Historic England and Reading Planning Authority during the planning approval process.
Closure of New Directions North building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre an alternative RBC site	To be determined once relocation decision is made.
Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic Offices	No
Increased Utilisation of the Civic	No
Avenue Centre	No

Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Think about your complaints, consultation, and feedback.	
Proposed Changes	Yes or No
Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different Buildings	No
Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom to Abbey Gate	No
Closure of New Directions North building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre an alternative RBC site	To be determined once relocation decision is made
Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic Offices	No
Increased Utilisation of the Civic	No
Avenue Centre	No

If the answer is Yes to any of the above you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment. Following the scoping assessment above, only one of the proposals is deemed to require a full Equalities Impact Assessment. The proposal is Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to the Abbey Gate. Please see the section on 'Collect and Assess Your data' for the full equality impact assessment below.

If No you **MUST** complete this statement:

An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because:	
Proposed Changes	
Relocation of the Registration Service for Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Service into three different Buildings	<p>There will be no significant material change to the registration service due to relocation to three different buildings.</p> <p>The only change would be a move to postal service for replacement certificates due to the remote location of the strong room. Customers can</p>

	book an appointment to request for a replacement certificate which would then be sent by post, a number of local authorities now deliver replacement certificates by post.
Relocation of the Victorian schoolroom to Abbey Gate	Full Equality Impact Assessment required due to the lack of disability access at Abbey Gate. This is completed below in this document.
Closure of New Directions North building and Relocation to Emmer Green Children Centre an alternative RBC site	To be determined once relocation decision is made.
Relocation of Family Support Centre to Civic Offices	The Civic Offices is the main office for RBC. Relocation would ensure families have good links to public transport and car parking facilities available across the town centre including dedicated disabled parking spaces families with an appointment to visit the Civic. Including the provision child friendly meeting spaces that are safe and secure.
Increased Utilisation of the Civic	The Civic Offices is the main office for RBC. The proposed works is to allow additional occupancy by staff and some services to be achieved. This is not expected to impact on any of the protected characteristic.
Avenue Centre	The aim of the work at the Avenue Centre is to improve the building, increase its capacity and implement corporate protocols on flexible work style. This is not expected to impact on any of the protected characteristic.

Signed (completing officer) Reubena Ovuorie	Date 29 th June 2016
Signed (Lead Officer) Daryn Inston	Date 5 th July 2016

Collect and Assess your Data

Using information from Census, residents survey data, service monitoring data, satisfaction or complaints, feedback, consultation, research, your knowledge and the knowledge of people in your team, staff groups etc. describe how the proposal could impact on each group. Include both positive and negative impacts.

Describe how this proposal could impact on Racial groups

There are no specific impacts anticipated for this category.

Is there a negative impact? No

Describe how this proposal could impact on Gender/transgender (cover pregnancy and maternity, marriage)

Pregnant women accompanying children or visiting the Victorian schoolroom at Abbey Gate may find it more difficult in the later stages of pregnancy to climb up the steep stairs to the 1st floor where the schoolroom would be located.

To mitigate this impact on the above, alternative educational programmes will be available at the Reading Museum which has lifts for easy access.

There are no specific impacts anticipated on gender/transgender or marriage.

Is there a negative impact? Yes

Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability

The Abbey Gate is the only surviving Gate of Reading Abbey. It contains many layers of architectural history and is an interesting example of medieval Abbey Gate architecture and is a good example of a George Gilbert Scott restoration. The original 12th century rounded inner arch and the 13th century medieval style pointed outer arches are enclosed in 19th century restoration work and dotted with 20th century examples of conservation repairs.

During the Planning approval process for the currently planned conservation and restoration work; Historic England and Reading Planning Authority recommended that due to nature of the building of being Grade I listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument as well as relative small size of the building it would not be practical or appropriate to make Abbey Gate fully accessible.

To make the building accessible, a lift would need to be installed and possibly works to the entrance into the building. The cost of such a conversation would be both extremely expensive to provide and result in significant loss of the historic fabric of the building.

Alternative educational programmes would be available at Reading Museum which has lifts and accessible to all. In addition, marketing materials will clearly advise that there is no disability access due to the architectural history of the building.

Is there a negative impact? Yes

Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)

There are no specific impacts anticipated for this category.

Is there a negative impact? No

Describe how this proposal could impact on Age

Elderly persons accompanying children or visiting the Victorian schoolroom at Abbey Gate may find it more difficult to climb up the steep stairs to the 1st floor where the schoolroom would be located.

To mitigate this impact, alternative educational programmes will be available at the Reading Museum which has lifts for easy access.

Is there a negative impact? Yes

Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief?

There are no specific impacts anticipated for this category.

Is there a negative impact? No

Make a Decision

If the impact is negative then you must consider whether you can legally justify it. If not you must set out how you will reduce or eliminate the impact. If you are not sure what the impact will be you MUST assume that there could be a negative impact. You may have to do further consultation or test out your proposal and monitor the impact before full implementation.

Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason

As outlined above, the relocation of the Victorian schoolroom from the Town Hall to Abbey Gate is anticipated to have negative impacts on three protected groups.

It is acknowledged that the historic and national significance of Abbey Gate's architecture places a constraint on providing fully accessibility within the building. To mitigate this negative impact on the protected groups identified, alternative educational programme would be available at Reading Museum for anyone unable to visit the Victorian schoolroom as a result of accessibility.

In view of the mitigation outlined above, any impact from the relocation of the Victorian schoolroom to Abbey Gate is now considered minimal. It is therefore recommended that the relocation of the Victorian schoolroom to Abbey Gate is progressed.

How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?

Reading Museum education team would monitor the impact.

Signed (completing officer) Reubena Ovuorie

Date 4th July 2016

Signed (Lead Officer) Daryn Inston

Date 5th July 2016

**THE CORPORATE ASSET
MANAGEMENT PLAN
2016–19
And Year 1 Review - 2015/16**

Strategic Aim:

To use property as a corporate resource to support and shape the delivery of appropriately located core services whilst driving efficiencies to help close the budget gap.



The purpose of this document is to update the Council's Property Strategy for 2015-2018 with the Year 1 deliverables and Year 2 Forward Plan targets.

The document recognising the ongoing financial planning horizon where savings of circa [£39m] are still required by 2018/19.

The scale of the challenge means that:

- the size of the Council's portfolio will continue to reduce
- the cost of managing property will continue to reduce
- the nature of the Council's estate will continue to change

Key Principles:

- Optimise capital receipts balanced against strategic investment decisions and rental streams
- Rationalise building and reduce running costs
- Facilitate new service offers
 - Co-location
 - Reduce front doors
 - Flexible working
- Maximise cost recovery / income
- Deliver energy efficiency
- Reduce liabilities such as back-log maintenance
- Ensure retained buildings are Health and Safety compliant
- Work in partnership improve offer and share costs
- Secure investments and acquisitions supported by a sound business case
- Support the delivery of infrastructure to meet Reading's needs.

2015/16 - Year 1 review - progress against targets

No	2015/16 Action	2015/16 Progress
1	Active programme to dispose of assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £3.7m capital receipts secured • 11 assets identified for disposal in 16/17 at year commencement • numerous ongoing `in year` reviews to identify additional disposal opportunities • 4 additional leasehold disposals being progressed and other ongoing reviews to identify additional leasehold disposal opportunities • Process established for reviewing use of community assets • Clear links to service reviews and office accommodation reviews
<u>2</u>	Complete a Strategic Office Accommodation Review	<p>Strategic review of office accommodation commenced and asset specific consolidation/improvement/disposal recommendations being progressed as regards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Avenue Centre • Emmer Green Youth and Community Centre. • Civic Centre • Yeomanry House • Amethyst Lane <p>Future phases will review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thamesbridge House, Northumberland Avenue • 19 Bennet Road (the depot) • 2-4 Darwin Close and • The Hamilton Centre
<u>3</u>	Review the Council's leisure provision	<p>Strategic outcomes identified and Leisure project structure established with external project management and specialist support</p> <p>Specific project work streams progressing with Palmer Park/Arthur Hill and Central/Rivermead pool provision</p>
<u>4</u>	Progress Community Hubs:	Specific project work stream ongoing for five community hubs:

	Battle South Reading Dee Park Amersham Road Southcote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle: feasibility complete and consultation carried out as part of the library review. • South Reading Y&C Centre: RBC working with WCDA to deliver improvements to the community café • Dee Park: Council developer partner contractually obliged to deliver a new community hub with programmed delivery in 2017-18 • Amersham Rd: partnership working with Earley Charity and £500k grant monies secured to reconfigure and improve building and service outputs for local people • Southcote: feasibility and consultation undertaken to improve and expand facility (linked to library review)
<u>4</u>	Former Civic Offices and Hosier Street Regeneration	Demolition progressing on program and contract heads of terms for civic area regeneration agreed with preferred development partner
<u>5</u>	Council House Building programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site specific project work streams for Council house progressing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Conwy Close; design team appointed, design options and public consultation. Start on site target Q4 2016 ii) George St; design team appointed and outline feasibility progressing • Project for provision of temporary units being progressed at Lowfield Rd • Project group and process established to assess deliverability of opportunity sites for affordable housing provision or market disposal a number of sites currently being evaluated
<u>6</u>	Compliance, condition and health and safety improvements of Council buildings	A corporate condition and compliance programme was developed in 2015/16 which included statutory compliance on asbestos, legionella control and fire risk and a range of high priority condition related work.

		The programme will continue in 2016/17 and cover all high priority H&S, statutory compliance and condition related work.
<u>7</u>	Schools	<p>Of the committed projects 6 are complete (Alfred Sutton, St Michaels, Geoffrey Field Infant and Junior, The Hill, St Martins and Thameside), 6 are on site (Southcote, Ridgeway, Churchend, EP Collier, Hodsoll Rd and Riverside) and 1 is in pre construction (Newtown).</p> <p>The overall Programme cost forecast remains within the revised budget of £61.7M.</p>
<u>8</u>	Corporate approach and strategic service reviews	<p>Ongoing projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of Maples Adult Day Care service to Rivermead • Consolidation of DAAT service to 127 Oxford Rd/4 Waylen St • Maximising beneficial use of 1A Rupert Sq • Relocating East Reading Children's Centre to Sun St Community Centre
<u>9</u>	Go live with Atrium	System structured with block/site/asset fields and data entry with live feeds established for corporate property and core Estateman data. Planet FM/Tribal data input progressing. Completion is due later in the year.
<u>10</u>	Secure energy efficiency measures	<p>Processes have been developed to assess the requirements and set out priorities for investment required to meet current legislation including assessment, metering and improvements to the energy efficiency of buildings where required.</p> <p>These include Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations 2012, the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in Building Regulations (2015) and Heat Network (metering and Billing) Regulations (2014).</p>
<u>11</u>	Delivery of new extra care and nursing provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arthur Clarke: Development partner in contract to deliver 43 ECH flats with RBC nominations to 16. Planning Application submitted. • Alice Burrows - Procurement of care contract to deliver 30 spaces for frail/elderly/dementia care with RBC

		<p>100% nominations, currently negotiating with preferred partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Park Village - 129 Unit Extra Care scheme. of which RBC has nominations to 56 rented and 24 Shared ownership units. Contractor on site • Supported Living Scheme - 14 units of accommodation due for completion Summer 2016
<u>12</u>	Transport Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Christchurch Bridge (the shared pedestrian cycle bridge across the River Thames) • Mere oak Park & Ride site (573 spaces), Winnersh Park & Ride site (600 spaces) • the Napier Road underpass and the A33 pinch point highway scheme
<u>13</u>	Working with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County wide One Public Estate working group established to identify opportunities and efficiencies across public sector assets in process of data collection and with scheme specific project work progressing • Berks Broadband: working group established to assess benefits and efficiencies of a Berks Unitary working with a countywide provider, in process of data collection • Community lettings Policy: formal approval of Policy Committee working with WEA to give 3rd sector partners fair opportunity to bid for surplus Council assets
<u>14</u>	Heritage and Cultural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Lottery funding secured for Abbey Ruins restoration work • [£500k Arts Council funding secured to refurbish and refresh 21 South Street • Ongoing review of Central Club
<u>15</u>	Cemetery space	Policy Committee approval for the extension of the cemetery subject to planning.

2016/19 - Forward Plan

The following key actions will be taken in relation to property assets in 2016/17 and in future years.

No	Action	
1	Active programme to dispose of assets against a target of £7m in 16/17	Ongoing with 11 potential disposals currently progressing with estimated total receipt of £7.3m and additional potential assets flagged within corporate asset/service review work
<u>2</u>	Implement a Strategic Office Accommodation Review	<p>Implement proposals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caversham Centre/Emmer Green • Civic Offices • The Avenue Centre • Amethyst Lane Family Support Centre • Yeomanry House • Henley Road Cemetery • Town Hall <p>Commence feasibility work in relation to Phase 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-4 Darwin Close • 19 Bennet Road • Hamilton Centre • Thamesbridge
<u>3</u>	Review the Council's leisure provision	Progress in accordance with Strategic Leisure Project Plan and scheme specific project plans
<u>4</u>	Progress Community Hubs in light of budget proposals	Progress in accordance with future delivery plans, subject to budget constraints and the outcome of the library review.
<u>4</u>	Former Civic Offices and Hosier Street Regen	Complete demolition and progress regeneration.
<u>5</u>	Council House Building programme	Progress in accordance with Scheme specific Project Plans and work streams identified in 2016/17
<u>6</u>	Compliance, condition and health and safety improvements of Council buildings	Implement the agreed improvement programme focused on compliance and condition related priorities. Securing or facilitating health and safety related improvements.
<u>7</u>	Schools	Continuation of School Expansion Programme and Progress specific service reviews.

<u>8</u>	Corporate approach and strategic service reviews	Progress in accordance with specific Service Reviews both ongoing from 2015/16 and due for review in 16/17 and including Adult Care and other outcomes eg Library Review. Secure revenue saving of £1million over 4 years. from asset reviews and disposals.
<u>9</u>	Go live with Atrium	Progress in accordance with Project Plan
<u>10</u>	Secure energy efficiency measures	Progress in accordance with specific Project Plans
<u>11</u>	Delivery of new extra care and nursing provision	Progress delivery in accordance with Scheme specific Project Plans for Alice Burrows, Green Park sites and Arthur Clarke (subject to planning permission)
<u>12</u>	Transport Infrastructure	Plan to deliver Phase 1 of the South Reading MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) scheme, the cycle parking hub at Reading Station (600 spaces) and the 20mph zone in East Reading.
<u>13</u>	Working with partners	Progress in accordance with specific Asset Reviews including 117 Cumberland Rd, Oxford Rd Community Centre.
<u>14</u>	Heritage, Cultural and Community assets	Progress in accordance with specific Asset Reviews including The Keep, Pakistani Community Centre, Central Club.
<u>15</u>	Additional Cemetery burial space	Develop Henley Road proposals in accordance with project plan
<u>16</u>	Increase Revenue from property (NEW)	Continue to identify income generating opportunities from within the Council's portfolio Identify and secure investment acquisition opportunities to increase the Council's net revenue where presenting a low risk.

APPENDIX D

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report by Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

TO:	Policy Committee		
DATE:	18 July 2016		
TITLE:	Condition and Compliance Works to Corporate Buildings 2016/17		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Lovelock	PORTFOLIO:	Leader
SERVICE:	ALL	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	Giorgio Framallicco	TEL:	0118 937 2604 (x72604)
JOB TITLE:	Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory	E-MAIL:	giorgio.framallicco@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the top-line allocation of the £2,500,000 provision in the 2016/17 Capital Programme for condition/compliance and priority health and safety works to corporate buildings. A detailed proactive repairs schedule setting out detailed areas of spend forms a Part 2 report (Appendix Gi and Gii) given that the works proposed have yet to be procured.
- 1.2 During 2015/16 the total value of work carried out as part of the condition and compliance programme was £1.78M. This included the following;
- Statutory compliance on asbestos, 'legionella control and fire risk - £720K
 - Compliance works for Zurich Insurance, other compliance and H&S works - £80K
 - Completion and Ongoing works form 2014/15 - £63K
 - Condition Programme Projects including Hexagon Chiller £200K, Palmer Park Stadium air conditioning and electrical work ££41K, Arthur Hill Baths electrical work and repairs to pipework £46K.
 - 'Non Building' Works, trees and 'Whiteknights dam project £135K
 - Major works at Central Pool £362K.
- 1.3 The allocation is informed by recent compliance audits and condition surveys and using an asset appraisal process to inform corporate and service decisions about the future of individual and groups of properties, to assess how those properties are performing, and to justify decisions about maintenance, forward investment and disposal.

- 1.4 It is estimated that a £2.500m + total budget will be required for works during 2016/17, including carry forward from 2015/16. The Capital Programme budget allocation over three financial years is shown in the table below:

Budget Allocation	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Condition Works	1,755	1,500	1,500
H&S and Compliance	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Allocation	2,755	2,500	2,500

2. DECISION

- 2.1 That the Policy Committee notes and approves the allocation of resources in 2016/17 Capital Programme for condition/compliance and priority health and safety works to corporate buildings, the headlines of which are (,000):

Health and Safety including Contingency	£ 900
Condition Programme Projects	£ 750
Condition Survey Works	£ 500
Non Building H&S Works	£ 300
Major Works	£ 50
TOTAL	£2,500

As the total value of works is in excess of the available budget for 2016/17, the programme will be reviewed and revised based on priority, procurement options and phasing over two financial years to ensure that expenditure is controlled within budget.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The latest condition and compliance surveys identify works totalling approximately £25M across all corporate properties, including schools. These were categorised into three degrees of urgency, with category 1 (most urgent) totaling £3.5M, category 2 £4.5M and category 3 £16M. The total value of compliance related works is estimated to be £1M.
- 3.3 These works related to all corporate buildings and excludes school which is managed separately. The survey costs are indicative costs, and not project costs; they also required updating for inflation and the building costs index. Finally, the survey only covers buildings, and therefore does not include risks associated with other assets, such as the cemetery, parks, trees etc.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The health and safety works to Council properties contribute to securing the most effective use of the Council's resources in the delivery of high quality, Best Value public services.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Asset surveys include compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), and the subsequent prioritisation of needs takes the DDA into consideration. DDA compliance is also part of the strategic and operation officer group asset appraisal process.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council as an employer must, as far as is reasonably practicable, safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its employees under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, in particular a safe place of work with safe access and egress.
- 6.2 In addition, the Council has responsibilities for the safety of its property portfolio under the Building Act 1984, under which regulations have been issued concerning asbestos, water management, electrics, wiring, lighting, ventilation, materials, structure testing, resistance to moisture etc. There is also fire legislation in relation to the building, materials etc.
- 6.3 The Disability Discrimination Act required the Council to remove obstacles to access to its buildings and facilities, to the best of its ability, from 1 October 2004.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report sets out the decisions to spend the £2,500,000 provision in the 2016/17 Capital Programme for condition/compliance and priority health and safety works to Council buildings.
- 7.2 This budget allocation is continuing to have an impact in meeting the safety, building maintenance and DDA requirements of the Council's extensive property portfolio.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS (forming a Part 2 report)

Appendix G1 - 2015/16 Corporate Condition and Compliance Works Programme
Appendix Gii - 2016/17 Corporate Condition and Compliance Works Programme