

EX44. Strategic Property Review – Review of Council Office Front Facing Offices

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the progress of work towards meeting the Council's requirements for 'front facing' offices and provided recommendations for progression. Proposals to meet the Council's front facing office requirements were set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

The office review identified that the Council occupied floorspace in excess of 7000sqm and was "space rich" occupying property inefficiently - i.e. more than double (17sqm per FTE) the aspired occupancy standard of 8sqm per FTE. As the Council moved to agile working for staff as part of 'Council of the Future', space requirements would reduce to meet its aspired occupancy standard. Implementation of the hub and spoke model of front facing offices would allow reduction from 11 to 5 front facing premises.

To intensify usage there would require to be a degree of adaptation and remodelling in the retained properties, costing in the region of £1.8m. If the running costs of the closed buildings were ring fenced and diverted to the retained properties, the savings, along with disposal receipts could provide the budget for the necessary improvement and generate a small saving to the Council after the initial period. Therefore the improvements could be funded as a "spend to save" project. Appendix 1 provided a summary of the proposals and Appendix 2 set out the expenditure programme and anticipated revenue savings.

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) the proposals to meet the Council's front facing office requirements as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report;**
- (2) the proposals for expenditure of £1.8m on a "spend to save" basis to supply upgraded front facing accommodation at Carronbank House, Central Library, Brockville and Grangemouth Social Work Office, and**
- (3) to extend the existing contract works being delivered by East Central Scotland Hub/Maxi Construction for upgrade work to proceed at Carronbank House.**