

FALKIRK COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ASSET RATIONALISATION: COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS PROJECT
MEETING: FALKIRK COUNCIL
DATE: 24 August 2015
AUTHOR: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides further information on the progress of the new Council headquarters proposal including commentary on the outcome of the public consultation process since the last report in June 2015. The report gives context to the proposal in relation to the Council's commitment to rationalise its office portfolio and modernise ways of working. The report also summarises the outcome of an options appraisal carried out in respect of a replacement Town Hall/Arts Centre and seeks decisions on the manner in which Council wishes to proceed with both projects.

1.2 Council is asked to consider:

- i) proceeding with a detailed planning application for the new headquarters building on the Municipal Buildings site, as part of the progression of the Stage 2 process for the project; and
- ii) to approve the principle of the replacement of the Town Hall/Arts Centre on the Middlefield College site subject to a detailed business case for final approval being considered at October Council. Negotiations will require to continue in parallel with Forth Valley College (FVC) on Heads of Terms to adhere to their project timescales for the overall College project.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 The development of the Council headquarters project is a key project in the Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy and is being pursued in order to rationalise the Council's office estate. The Council has previously recognised that the Municipal Buildings has reached the end of its serviceable life with some key components of the building significantly exceeding their intended design life and proving inefficient in terms of service delivery, maintenance, energy use and user/staff experience.

2.2 The Council's office utilisation review identified that it occupies 32,258 sq.m. of office accommodation with an average of 12.25 sq. m. per FTE which is in excess of modern standards. Replacement office accommodation would be on the basis of a general standard for net floor space of 8sq m per FTE with an average desk ratio, reflecting modern working practices of 0.8 per FTE.

- 2.3 The Council's approach is consistent with work to rationalise assets and improve office efficiency taking place in other parts of the country. Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) has led this approach on behalf of the Scottish Government reflecting concern that office utilisation is highly inefficient (on average less than 40% utilisation rates are evidenced). SFT are working with several national agencies, government departments and 28 local authorities, aiming to achieve c£500m savings across the national and local civil estate. SFT's work has reinforced the value of this approach:
- an average £225/m² revenue saving on office costs being achieved across Scotland, with office rationalisation projects breaking even on average within 12 years
 - the average desk space across the public sector is estimated to cost c£3500 per annum
 - significant benefits are being achieved by Councils through rationalising their office estates and introducing new working practices. These are resulting in reductions in office space (& costs); transport costs and carbon emissions as well as benefits of co-location in improved service delivery and staff morale.
- 2.4 The Council is committed to a process of business transformation, modernisation of its service delivery and asset rationalisation. The office headquarters project is intended to play an important role in the implementation of this approach. It has been designed as an integral element to the roll-out of modernised, mobile and flexible working being adopted across the Council.
- 2.5 The Council previously conducted a detailed assessment and options appraisal for its office headquarters, recognising that, in view of the poor condition and suitability of existing offices, 'do nothing' was not an option. An appraisal was conducted of options to conduct a minimum level refurbishment; a full scale rebuild; or a staged approach to the development, recognising that delivery of the civic/office facility might proceed separately to the replacement town hall.
- 2.6 In February 2014 the Executive agreed to pursue the option of a staged approach. This proposal aims to create a new headquarters facility, incorporating modern working systems and practices with new civic accommodation and office space for elected members and Municipal Buildings, Abbotsford House, Callendar Square and Willow House staff. A 'one-stop' facility would remain in the town centre for front-facing customer services. A business case for this option was considered by the Council on October 2014 and it was agreed to progress the project at an estimated cost of £20.94m.
- 2.7 The proposal is to be funded from the £1.9m revenues committed at existing office locations (realising savings from external leases and improved building efficiency) along with £1.5m of capital receipts generated from the site. The principle of adopting a fixed financial envelope for delivery of the project is an important one. The approach aims to avoid any adverse impact on revenue budgets or the Council's capital programme. The staged option to delivery was shown to be the cheapest option over the 30 years period assessed.

- 2.8 In June 2014 the Executive considered the options for location of the facility, considering Council-owned sites in the town centre and at the Falkirk Gateway. Following consideration of their respective merits, it was agreed that the existing Municipal Buildings site offered significant benefits in terms of its central, accessible location; availability; and retention of a substantial staff presence in close proximity to Falkirk town centre. The prominent road frontage location provides an opportunity to create a high quality building reflective of the Council's aspirations for its area and assisting with regeneration of the town centre's west-end.
- 2.9 The business case, presented to Council on October 2014 confirmed that delivery of the project is feasible within the financial boundaries set. It would address the Council's aim to rationalise existing assets and provide a modern civic and office headquarters facility better suited to future service needs. A timetable was identified suggesting that the new facility could be established by Spring 2017. Once the project is complete and the capital receipt from sale of the site received, a potential revenue saving of c£262k per annum is anticipated in the business case and this was highlighted as being available for reinvestment in the delivery of a replacement town hall facility.
- 2.10 In June 2015 the Council was advised of the offer that had been received from FVC to pursue an opportunity to integrate the development of the replacement town hall/arts centre with the proposed £80m College campus due for delivery at the Middlefield site in the Falkirk Gateway. The Council agreed to conduct an options appraisal as to the means of delivering a replacement facility via the College or other sites. FVC have a fixed timetable for the development of the business case to enable delivery of the project by August 2019. A decision on the outcome of the options appraisal is therefore required in order to determine if the project is to proceed through development of a business case in partnership with FVC.

3.0 NEW COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS

- 3.1 The Stage 1 process for design of the new office headquarters has now been concluded and Hubco, the Council's contractor, have provided a Stage 1 report. In summary, the design has been taken to a completed concept design stage and a series of preliminary site investigations and assessment studies (transport, flooding, drainage, invasive site investigations and utilities) have been undertaken to enable delivery of the project. Details of the design work to date are given in Appendix 1 (to follow).
- 3.2 As requested by the Council, a consultation exercise has also been undertaken. This exercise addressed the purpose of the project and has been completed in readiness for the Council to apply for formal planning consent. The outcome of the consultation exercise is considered below.

A. Consultation and Communication

- 3.3 Further to the Council's request for consultation to be undertaken, an exercise took place during the period 11 May to 31 July, seeking views on the Council headquarters project. The Project team has undertaken an extensive exercise to consult on the proposal. Information was conveyed on the Council website and via the Falkirk Council News and views were sought via online surveys. Drop-in events were held on three days at the Howgate Centre and meetings took place with the Community Forum (Chairs of Community Councils), members of the Citizen's Panel and interest groups (including neighbouring residents). Briefings for elected members and members of staff likely to be affected by the proposal were also undertaken.
- 3.4 Appendix 2 is a report on the consultation and engagement that has been undertaken as part of Stage 1 of the project. The report summarises the comments that have been given and provides responses on behalf of the Council. In summary:
- 175 responses in total, of which:
 - 140 responses were conveyed via the online survey
 - 20 responses were provided by email/letter
 - 15 responses received at the Howgate drop-in events

The responses have been sorted initially between:

- comments giving views on the general perception of the project, and
- comments concerning the design and delivery of the project which are relevant considerations for the purpose of submitting a planning application.

This is an important distinction, the rationale for which is set out below.

- 3.5 Several of the comments received convey a generally negative perception of the project reacting against a substantial capital commitment being made at a time of austerity. This suggests that some respondents had a level of misunderstanding and may have misconstrued the project's purpose and the degree of choice available to the Council in relation to expenditure on this project versus expenditure in other service areas. These comments failed to recognise that the Council aims to deliver the project within the bounds of its existing office accommodation budget thus avoiding any impact on service budgets or the capital programme. Similarly it is not recognised that, if the HQ project does not progress, the bulk of the Council's current expenditure on its existing office assets must continue to be spent on this activity.
- 3.6 Several respondents did offer comments concerning the project that provide views on the approach to the project and the design proposals presented. These responses are considered to offer material comments in terms of any subsequent submission of a planning application. They have been summarised in a formal pre-application consultation report that will accompany the detailed planning application. The comments can be categorised into comments on the following main issues:-

- ***Locational issues*** – concerns about why a town centre location has been chosen, why the Westbank/Municipal Building site has been chosen, proximity to Wellside Court etc.
- ***Design issues*** – concerns about flat roof, elevational treatments, visitor access, massing, etc.
- ***Environmental issues*** – concerns about asbestos, demolition, noise, vibration, working hours etc.
- ***Access & Transportation*** - concerns about traffic, parking, disabled access etc.
- ***Building Function*** – uses within the building, meetings, reception etc.

3.7 The responses to each of the concerns are outlined in the pre-application consultation report and it is anticipated that some of the concerns expressed can be mitigated as the design progresses as part of Stage 2. Adjoining neighbours, e.g. in Wellside Court have legitimate concerns about the project and these will be worked through in more detail by the project team prior to an application for planning consent being submitted, however in response to the comments submitted, it is proposed that the design as a minimum address the following:

- A reduction in height of the building adjacent to Wellside Court by 1.3 metres to reduce the risk of over-shading and protect privacy
- Moving the building a distance of 7 metres from the Wellside Place blocks
- Preparation of a green travel plan to address parking issues
- Examination of the scope to include solar panels and other renewable energy technologies
- Ensuring that public areas are fully accessible to all staff and members of the public (including disabled people)
- Preparation of landscape plans
- The conduct of tree surveys to retain tree cover where feasible on the site and provide amenity features
- Inclusion of protective measures during the demolition phase
- the addressing of working hours during the period of construction

3.8 It is important to note that, for those people who attended the open public sessions in the Howgate Centre, at Community Council meetings or with the Community Forum, after presentation and discussion on the facts of the project with members of the project team many expressed that they were in favour of the project. Only one written response was received from a Community Council (Larbert & Stenhousemuir) who did not reach a firm conclusion. They indicated that they understood the Council's case for the project but that they had received expressions of concern in relation to the impact of spend on frontline services.

- 3.9 In conclusion, the responses to the consultation exercise undertaken on the project suggest that a level of interest in the project amongst the general public is apparent, but not significant. Some people expressed concern over the Council committing significant expenditure on the project at a time of austerity. This may have misconstrued the project's purpose and, when explained that it has to be delivered within fixed office budgets unavailable to be re-directed, there was a level of satisfaction with the Council's approach. People located close to the facility have expressed views that are material to the project's design some of which have been addressed in amendments to the design or will need to be resolved in the subsequent stages seeking planning approval. It is important to note that the Council will be seeking planning approval as a landowner/applicant. It would subsequently consider the merits of the proposal as statutory planning authority.
- 3.10 It is worth noting that staff surveys undertaken have indicated that some staff anticipated to be located in the building have concerns relating to the roll-out of modern working practices including open-plan working, mobile and flexible working and in regard to issues such as the availability of parking. Experience from other authorities has shown that these issues can be addressed successfully and it is proposed that these be progressed in the project design and subsequent management. Staff surveyed also indicated that at least two-thirds will use the facilities in the town centre at least once a week. With an additional 285 staff transferring to the town centre from Abbotsford House, this will offer a boost to local retailers.

B. Property Issues

Westbank Clinic

- 3.11 Progress has been continuing on the site assembly necessary for delivery of the project including the acquisition of the Westbank Clinic site which will assist in providing a facility which is integrated with the town centre. Heads of Terms have been agreed in principle with NHS Forth Valley (NHSFV) for the acquisition of the Westbank Clinic. The purchase price proposed is £175,000 (subject to there being no abnormal development costs arising, e.g. from adverse ground conditions). This will be payable on a deferred basis i.e. not later than 2 years following practical completion of the new headquarters building.
- 3.12 The date of entry proposed will be aligned to the Council Stage 2 approval on the HQ project and just before formal contract close. Thereafter the Council will take entry to the property and proceed with demolition. NHSFV will remain responsible for management and maintenance of the building until the Council takes entry.

Abbotsford House

- 3.13 As agreed by the Council in June 2015, negotiations are continuing with the Council's landlord to seek the extension of the lease for a period of 12 months, with the option of 3 monthly extensions thereafter on the basis of an annual rental of £200,000.

Callander Square

- 3.14 There is a requirement for the Council to consider the need for extension to the lease held for its One-Stop-Shop facility at Callander Square. The lease expires in January 2016 2015 and it is suggested that, as with Abbotsford House, a lease extension of one year with an option to extend on a 3-monthly basis be sought. Integral to the proposal to establish the office headquarters facility is the need to confirm the future customer service requirement to be accommodated in the town centre, work on which is underway via the review of one-stop shop provision.

4.0 TOWN HALL - OUTLINE OPTION APPRAISAL

- 4.1. Following the Council's June decision to proceed with an option appraisal of the proposals from re-provision of the town hall/arts centre facility, the Council/Falkirk Community Trust created a high level brief and provided this to Hubco identifying the key requirements to be appraised as part of the site/cost appraisal. The key elements of the specification are summarised below:
- a key 'flagship' cultural venue for area
 - 350 – 420 seat venue capable of accommodating medium to large productions
 - fully retractable seating to provide flexibility for different types of productions/events
 - foyer and café/bar to accommodate audience waiting/intervals
 - a suite of multi-purpose rooms for classes, workshops and rehearsal space
 - stage capable of accommodating 80-100 cast allowing a range of performance types from concerts to pantomime.
- 4.2. The Trust also requested that a further option be considered to accommodate a new main library within the project given issues currently experienced relating to running costs, suitability and maintenance issues of the current Falkirk Library building.
- 4.3 Eight sites were identified for assessment (see Appendix 3)
- a) Municipal Buildings
 - b) Meeks Road
 - c) Melville Street
 - d) Westfield/Gateway
 - e) Kemper Avenue
 - f) Callendar Park
 - g) Middlefield Campus – Forth Valley College
 - h) East End/Callendar Square – developer led
- 4.4 With the exception of Middlefield Campus, which provides a partnership opportunity with Forth Valley College as part of their new College development proposals and the East End/Callendar Square site, which is part of a developer led proposal, the remainder of the sites are Council owned.

A. SITE OPTIONS

Council Owned Sites

- 4.5 An appraisal of the Council-owned sites (sites a-f) above has been undertaken. This appraisal addressed financial and non-financial considerations, in a high-level assessment which tested the delivery of a standard building footprint of 1,725sq.m. (gross internal floor area) sq.m. This allowed comparison of the fixed capital costs (estimated at £5.68m for delivery of a building, associated servicing and 100 parking spaces).
- 4.6 The development mechanism for the Council owned sites involves funding the project from capital borrowing either through traditional procurement or via Hubco in a similar way to the HQ proposals. The estimate capital costs for each option range considerably, given the varying complexities of developing each site. The Municipal Buildings site is anticipated to be lowest at £5.75m, with a stand-alone development at Falkirk Gateway (where new site servicing and associated infrastructure would be required) being £ 7.7m.
- 4.7 Delivery of the town hall/arts facility on the Municipal Buildings site would offer the benefits of shared servicing and access as well as some co-location with the civic facilities being provided as part of the office headquarters facility. It would however require a considerable level of re-design of the facility and is anticipated to require additional costs in external works. The development at this site would delay the project, requiring that the design and consultation process be recommenced (at a minimum cost of £80k). It would also increase inflation costs (approximately £250k per quarter) and reduce the capital receipt realised from the site.
- 4.8 The additional cost to incorporate a new Falkirk Library within the development has been estimated at £1.4m. This is unable to be contained within the existing project budget and, should the Council seek to progress this requirement, would need additional capital borrowing.

East End/Callendar Square

- 4.9 An outline proposal has been received from a developer with interests in the east end of the town centre. The initial sketch proposals show the replacement Town Hall/Arts Centre located as part of a wider east end redevelopment including the site of the existing Callendar Square Shopping Centre, Callendar Riggs, Bus-Station and surrounding properties. The proposals envisage substantial new leisure and retail development together with a new hotel as part of the scheme over which the Council would require to take a head lease and bear all the risks associated with the redevelopment proposals.
- 4.10 The timescales for and eventual costs of this site acquisition cannot currently be confirmed as the developer requires to secure various property interests in the area. This would require assistance from the Council in the form of establishing compulsory purchase orders etc. While offering benefits in the delivery of regeneration at an important location within the town centre it is anticipated that this approach would expose the Council to very substantial financial risk. The developer seeks that the Council enter into a rental guarantee of £1.385m per annum over the term of a 35 year lease providing for rental increases of up to 5% per annum which would be inappropriate to pursue at this time.

Middlefield Campus (Forth Valley College)

- 4.11 This proposal sees the delivery of the town hall/arts facility as an integral component of FVC's £80m campus development. The campus will form an integral development to the proposals for the Falkirk Gateway site, a flagship development within the Falkirk TIF initiative being led by the Council. Delivery of this integrated development is anticipated to give a much needed impetus to development and is compatible with related developments in this vicinity including the Helix and Falkirk Community Stadium.
- 4.12 This proposal is subject to the development of a full business case. It would be structured by means of a Development Agreement and an Interface Agreement, which would be entered into between FVC and the Council. These agreements would set out the parties' respective obligations in respect of the development and the operation of the facility post completion. The Council would make a financial contribution, currently estimated at £4.0m to the project in respect of the costs of construction of the Arts Centre, together with life cycle and maintenance and running costs of the facility. The Council would occupy the Arts Centre under the terms of a lease to be granted by FVC and in turn sub-let the facility to Falkirk Community Trust.

Option Appraisal: Conclusions

- 4.13 The town hall appraisal determined the preferred option(s) by assessing and scoring:-
- i) technical and construction perspectives,
 - ii) the operator's perspective, including location, in consultation with Falkirk Community Trust
 - iii) costs and value for money with the outcome taking account of the overall cost envelope for delivery the headquarters project of £20.94m previously identified.
- 4.14 Scoring of the 3 categories has been undertaken by Council Officers, FCT and Hub Co and the results are presented in Appendix 3. While the Municipal Buildings site ranked highest in terms of the non-financial assessment, the outcome taking into account value for money considerations is that the Middlefield Campus site is the only site that could deliver a solution that will provide the accommodation that FCT require within the parameters of the cost envelope identified.
- 4.15 It is important to stress that there is a tight timescale for the Council's decision on this project. FVC need to confirm the Council's intention to participate in the project before concluding the business case. As a result it is necessary for the Council to determine its position at the next Council meeting on 7 October 2015. Should the Council wish to proceed with the development of the town hall/arts facility in partnership with FVC the following actions are recommended as part of the development of a full business case for the preferred option.
- Refine the brief in line with available capital budget /affordability parameters
 - Develop the design concept to validate size, specification and quality
 - Agree Heads of Terms with the College and agree a detailed programme for the replacement FTH
 - Complete a full financial appraisal in consultation with the Trust taking account of capital and ongoing revenue budget implications.

- 4.16 Should the Council determine not to proceed with this development it will need to further consider its options for delivery of a new facility on the understanding that this will have an adverse impact on its capital and/or revenue budgets.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Policy Implications

- 5.1 The Council headquarters project is being progressed in accordance with the Council's policies as expressed in the Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Plan, the Asset Management Strategy, Information Strategy and Carbon Management Plan. Asset rationalisation is a key element of these policies and the headquarters project aims to reduce office utilisation for the services involved by in excess of 50% with a consequent reduction in carbon emissions of up to 80%.

Legal Implications

- 5.2 Delivery of the Council headquarters project is being undertaken through the Council's membership of the East Central Territory Hubco initiative. Should the Council agree to proceed with the development a further contract will be entered into with Hubco for delivery of Stage 2 design works, including submission of an application for planning consent. Legal and financial close for the project would take place following the issue of planning consent.
- 5.3 Should the Council agree to proceed with the delivery of the town hall/arts facility in partnership with FVC, a Development Agreement and Interface Agreement would require to be entered into. A lease would also be necessary between the Council and FCT. These agreements would be finalised on completion of the detailed business case.

Financial Implications

- 5.4 The Council aims to secure delivery within the financial envelope identified of £1.9m annually (i.e. the current running costs of the buildings to be rationalised). By proceeding on the lines agreed in the October 2014 report to the Council, the prospect of achieving a revenue saving of £262k annually in the year post-completion was suggested. This was highlighted as being available to reinvest in the delivery of the town hall/arts facility project should the Council agree to proceed with this project. Any additional elements added to the project or delays in delivery will impact on the achievement of the savings that have been anticipated.
- 5.5 A further cost appraisal has been undertaken by the contractor and is contained in the Stage 1 report. A report, summarising these costs in terms of the Council's budget has been compiled (Appendix 4). This confirms that the project remains substantially in accordance with the cost assumptions made in October 2014.
- 5.6 Control measures are in place with Hubco with the intent of keeping the project's delivery cost within the available budget. A design freeze will apply on conclusion of Stage 1, after which any design amendments will involve additional cost. It is important to note that additional costs will apply to the project as a consequence of works necessary to meet new building standards being introduced for warrant applications received after end September 2015. This requires that a submission for building warrant be made before end September.

- 5.7 Since the October 14 decision, the Council has committed £200,000 for delivery of Stage 1 of the project, which breaks down as follows:-

- Professional fees £115,000
- Surveys & investigations £75,000
- Other £10,000

Progress to Stage 2, is forecast to cost the Council in the region of £525,000. These costs will be abortive (and would require to be met from revenue budgets during 2015/16) if the Council decides ultimately not to progress the project.

Project Delivery, Benefits and Risk Implications

- 5.8 The Council has reached an important stage in its decision-making concerning the delivery of the headquarters accommodation project:

- It has acknowledged that do nothing is not an option.
- The existing business case and subsequent work undertaken for the staged approach identifies that delivery of the civic and office headquarters development and the town hall replacement project (in partnership with FVC) is achievable within the £1.9m p.a. financial envelope available from existing premises with no impact on other budgets.
- Subject to completion of the final business case, the proposal to progress the town hall/arts centre in partnership with FVC enables both projects to be delivered at a combined capital cost of £21m.

Risks

- There are significant risks associated with the Council's existing office buildings requiring action to conduct essential repairs, extend existing leases and identify a longer term solution to its needs.
- Delays in decision-making on the civic/office headquarters present a significant risk of incurring additional cost in relation to meeting building regulation requirements and cost inflation (est. £1m p.a.)
- The town hall/arts centre project has a fixed timescale for decision and FVC require a decision from the Council on delivery of this option by 7 October. Failure to establish a solution for this facility will delay or erode the achievement of the capital receipt from the site (cost £1.5m).
- There are additional risks to the Council:
 - Risks of building failure resulting in service disruption and unbudgeted expenditure
 - Financial risks in failing to identify a solution to its civic, office and town hall asset needs within the budgets currently available would cause additional costs to be incurred at existing premises
 - Reputational risks in aborting delivery of prestige projects in the course of their development

- Risks to staff morale in sustaining operations from properties that are in poor condition and are ill-suited to modern ways of working

Benefits

- Delivery of each project offers significant benefits in relation to:
 - Completion of modern, sustainable and efficient assets suited to the long term needs of the Council and wider Falkirk community
 - Introduction of modern, more efficient ways of working
 - Rationalising the Council's existing office base from four office buildings into one, with a reduction of floorspace usage by 50% and reduction of carbon emissions by c80%
 - Stimulating regeneration through relocating an additional 280 staff to Falkirk town centre
 - Supporting and helping initiate development at the Falkirk Gateway to assist delivery of the Falkirk TIF
 - providing a combined learning and cultural asset which is complementary to the existing assets at the Helix and Falkirk Community Stadium
 - joint working with community planning partners to secure outcomes which meet the Council's strategic objectives and
 - Demonstrating the Council's commitment to lead the delivery of new development, adopt modern ways of working and to be in the vanguard of change for its community

The project team has undertaken a review of all risks associated with the construction and delivery of the new HQ as part of Stage 1. If it is agreed to proceed, the project team will, as part of stage 2, ensure that risks to the project and Council are updated on a Risk Register.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The delivery of the Council headquarters project is an important project for the Council. The project has reached a point in its design where submissions can be progressed for planning and building warrant, enabling delivery during 2017. Importantly, the project can be delivered within the financial envelope of the budgets committed to the existing buildings together with identified capital receipts.
- 6.2 Consultation undertaken concerning the project has provided mixed messages from the wider community. The response has not been extensive and, while the initial reaction from some members of the community has not been positive, once explained many people have recognised the benefits of the project.
- 6.3 The option available to the Council and FCT of proceeding with the development of a replacement town hall in partnership with FVC offers a unique opportunity for the creation of an innovative cultural and learning asset which can assist in stimulating development at the Falkirk Gateway.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- i) To proceed with the Council civic & office headquarters project, authorising the Director of Development Services to:**
 - a) Commission Hubco to progress the Stage 2 designs for the new facility**
 - b) request that Hubco submit the detailed planning application for the new Headquarters building on the Municipal Buildings site**
 - c) seek to acquire the Westbank Clinic site from NHSFV on suitable terms and at a cost of £175,000**
 - d) seek an extension of the lease at Callander Square for a period of one year and provision for three-monthly extensions**
- ii) the principle of replacement of the Town Hall/Arts Centre on the Middlefield site to be pursued in partnership with FVC/FCT and subject to a detailed business case for final approval being considered at October Council.**

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Director of Development Services

Date: 14th August, 2015

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Reports to Executive – 25th February 2014 & 17th June 2014
2. Reports to Council – 8 October 2014 & 24 June 2015
3. Headquarters Project Full Business Case
4. Stage 1 Report
5. Town Hall/Arts & Performance Venue Feasibility Review and Site Options Appraisal
6. Responses to consultation

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01324 504798 and ask for Alan Urquhart or Lesley Malkin.