



Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	24 th January 2022
Subject:	Accommodation Strategy Update
Key Decision:	Yes - this report represents a key decision because of the financial value of the requested procurement
Responsible Officer:	Charlie Stewart - Corporate Director Resources
Portfolio Holder:	Graham Henson - Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Regeneration, Partnerships and Devolution; Councillor Natasha Proctor – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All wards
Enclosures:	Equality impact assessments for: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Forward Drive – from May 2021 Cabinet report.2. Initial assessment for ancillary sites January 2022.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates Members on progress with the Council's Accommodation strategy, including the arrangements for provision of ancillary space, and seeks approval for a key part of the strategy. Approval is requested to procure the fit out of the two commercial units on the ground floor of Sheldon House, Gayton Road for the purpose of providing client facing office accommodation for the Citizens Advice Bureau and Emergency Front Door council services.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Note the proposals for the delivery of the Council's Accommodation Strategy including the use of ancillary spaces;
2. Approve the procurement of a contractor to undertake works to fit out the ground floor of Sheldon House, Gayton Road to provide the Council's emergency front door service and accommodation for the Citizens Advice Bureau, to the maximum value of £875k (construction costs including 10% contingency) from the £1.5m existing Capital Programme budget
3. Delegate authority to award a contract following a compliant procurement to the Corporate Director for Community in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources and the Director of Finance and Assurance to appoint contractors to complete the works set out in the report, noting the overall capital cost cap of £1.5m for works to all ancillary sites referred to in this report. And to note existing delegated authority granted (in November 2018) to the Corporate Director for Community to agree any leases relating to the commercial units in Sheldon House.
4. Note that there will be a need for low-cost procurement for other ancillary site fit-out as mentioned in the paper and these will be managed using delegated powers as set out in the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
5. Delegate authority to award a contract following a compliant procurement to the Corporate Director for Community in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources and the Director of Finance and Assurance to appoint a Relocation Service contractor to deliver all move requirements for a smooth transition to Forward Drive and the Ancillary Sites, noting the budget of £200k that has been set for this purpose.

Reason: (for recommendations)

The provision of space to accommodate those services which cannot be moved to Forward Drive is a key part of the agreed Accommodation Strategy. Procurement delegations now need to be agreed to move forward with the provision of this accommodation.

The fit out of Gayton Road supports the cessation of use of the existing Civic Centre at Poets Corner by the Council and its handover to the Harrow Strategic Development Partnership (HSDP) for the development of over 1000 new homes including affordable homes (subject to obtaining planning permission). These new homes will provide significant additional social value and place making benefits. It

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

provides the site for key services that are moving from the Civic Centre and for our partner, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, who are moving from the Civic centre site.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

- 1.1 The report to Cabinet on the Accommodation Strategy in May 2021 developed a strategy based on the use of the new build at the Forward Drive depot as the Council's principal staff collaborative space, a new Civic Centre at Wealdstone and the accommodation of some resident-facing services, partner needs and member requirements separate from the build at Forward Drive.
- 1.2 The Accommodation Strategy will support the cessation of use of the existing Civic Centre at Poets Corner by the Council and its' handover to the HSDP for the development of over 1,000 homes including much needed affordable homes with the associated additional social value and place making benefits (subject to obtaining planning permission). The delivery of new homes and the social and economic regeneration of the Borough are key components of the Council's corporate priorities. Relocation of the CAB, one of the Council's key partners is also essential in the short term. They are currently temporarily accommodated in Civic 6, to enable the development at Milton Road, and will need to be moved to permanent accommodation to support the Civic Centre site being mainly vacated by October 2022.
- 1.3 The new Civic Centre in Wealdstone is entitled the Harrow New Civic (HNC) in this paper and is to be developed by the HSDP as part of the development of Peel Road. It will be the Council's 'front door' and principal location for resident interaction, as well as the Council's Civic heart.
- 1.4 The use of the new build at Forward Drive depot will enable the use of agile working to establish flexibility in the organisation, as well as bringing Depot and main office staff together in a more cohesive organisation.
- 1.5 The final location for those resident-facing services, partners and member requirements that could not be located in the new-build at Forward Drive (together called 'ancillary' spaces) were not defined in the paper of May 2021 as the full options appraisals had not been completed. This paper outlines the planned options and requests approval to commence procurement to fit out spaces as required.

2. Options considered

1. Review of the existing estate

An extensive review of the existing estate was conducted to analyse if it could accommodate the ancillary spaces with the following options considered:

It was found that all non-emergency People Directorate services could be accommodated within that Directorate's existing estate. This would provide benefits to users and staff through co-location of key activities. However, it was felt that their emergency services could not be accommodated in their current estate as the type of activity undertaken in their buildings was not compatible. Additionally, it was considered that the needs of Housing emergency services fitted well with those of the People Directorate so bringing them together in one location would be of benefit to residents.

Located on Kymberley Road by Harrow on the Hill station, Kings House is an 8-storey building providing office accommodation. All but the 3rd floor units are currently let. The site was deemed unsuitable for resident facing services, partner and member space due to the lack of appropriate entrance facilities and the tenants use of the space

The historic site at Headstone Manor was previously considered as the preferred location for the Register Office as it provides a large setting suitable for weddings and access to the secure archive facility run by the Museum. Although a large part of the service, ceremonies are not the only function provided by the Registry service. It was felt that the facility did not provide the right environment for interviews and registration appointments. Accessibility problems, due to limited public transport links were also a significant negative factor. However, the Great Barn at Headstone Manor is a licenced venue for ceremonies and is very suitable for larger events and the secure archive can be utilised for storing registers and deeds, but alternative space was needed to house the main base of the Registry Service.

2. Review of Commercial Property

A review of the commercial property market was undertaken to identify potential options. The price of available units ranges from £30 to £35 per sq ft and suitable ground floor space was limited. Additionally, several of the potential spaces required significant fit outs (both Category A and B) at significant capital investment on sites that are not owned by the Council. As no ideal units were found and the cost significant, they were discounted as suitable alternatives.

3. Background

3.1 The Council's agreed objectives in procuring the Harrow Strategic Development Partnership (HSDP) were:

- To deliver wider regeneration across the Borough via new and improved mixed tenure housing, civic and community facilities, new employment space and the enhanced use of property assets within the Borough.
- To accelerate the pace of housing delivery across the portfolio of its sites.
- To secure wider economic and social benefits for local residents, including skills and training, health improvement and new employment opportunities.
- Use existing and new property assets to optimise value for the Council.

- To contribute to the delivery of well-designed, high-quality places that make a difference for communities, businesses, residents and families both now and in the long term.
- 3.2 Following the procurement process, the bid and the appointment of Wates as the Council's partner the Council's ambition for the HSDP is to create 1,500 new homes across the borough, bringing with it affordable homes, community and commercial space, enhanced public realm and significant social value including jobs and training, support to the voluntary sector and environmental benefits. The partnership's development of market sale homes helps fund these benefits, as well as the HNC.
 - 3.3 Leaving Poets Corner Civic Centre in 2022, earlier than originally planned, brings forward the development of the site and the provision of affordable and market sale housing (subject to obtaining planning permission) with all the benefits to local residents that entails, contributing to the mitigation of housing need. It will significantly improve the appearance and quality of the place and the economy of Wealdstone. It will also bring forward the Council's receipts from development as well reducing the need to continue to run the old and inefficient civic centre.
 - 3.4 As agreed by Cabinet in May 2021, the Accommodation Strategy is based on plans for new Civic Centre in Wealdstone, sets out the use of Forward Drive as the Council's principal staff collaboration space and noted the need for additional ancillary space. This approach is based on an agile model of working which will bring in much greater flexibility in where and when staff can work to the benefit of staff welfare and morale, as well as services. Bringing Depot-based and Civic office staff closer together on one main collaborative site will also make everyone feel more part of one organisation which has been a key request from Depot staff.
 - 3.5 The new build at Forward Drive, being completed by Kier, is currently scheduled to complete in early March 2022. The Council-managed installations of furniture, network, audio visual equipment, the kitchen and café counter will overlap with the completion of the Kier works and are due to be finished allowing occupation to start in Spring 2022.
 - 3.6 Forward Drive is not suitable for general resident interactions, such as those routinely carried out by front-facing services currently delivered in the Civic Centre. This is because the building is designed for back-office purposes and as a working depot with significant vehicle and heavy equipment movement throughout the day.
 - 3.7 In the report of 27th May 2021, Cabinet established an Accommodation Strategy budget and identified the need to find alternative, often temporary, space for those resident-facing services, partners and member requirements that could not be located in the new-build at Forward Drive. This included space for Group Offices, Mayoral events, Committee and Council meetings prior to them being accommodated in the new Civic building on its completion in 2025.

- 3.8 A key requirement in finding alternative space for resident facing services was to also improve those services by co-locating them with related functions and making them more accessible to residents.
- 3.0 The selected sites and operational implications for each of the functions requiring ancillary space have been set out in this report and Cabinet is requested to agree the capital investment required to fit-out the identified solutions.

4. Services and Functions Moving to Permanent Accommodation

4.1 Resident Facing People Directorate Services

Appointment based services, and planned work with citizens and their families which were previously delivered from the Civic Centre are progressively being relocated across the People Directorate's current estate, and shared venues across the Borough. Spaces such as those at Children's Centres, Schools and NRCs will continue to be used instead of Civic 1, 5 and 6.

- 4.2 This promotes the benefits of delivery of core services close to where Residents live, within their own communities across the Borough. This model also establishes better synergy in service delivery with other statutory providers, and especially with the voluntary and community sector, allowing teams to work more closely together, in a more integrated and collaborative manner. This has been a successful development emanating from the Covid pandemic, and the shared responses to it, across the health, care and education system. Our accommodation strategy has sought to build on these positive developments and consolidate this more community orientated model as the norm for many of our core services in Adults, Children and Educational Services.

- 4.3 There is no capital cost associated with these moves.

4.4 General Front-Door Services

The majority of resident visits to the current Civic Centre are planned to be moved to other more suitable accommodation which will allow co-location with other related teams and better service to residents. The remaining resident requirements are planned to be managed in the following ways: (Those planned to be delivered from libraries may eventually move to the Harrow New Civic building subject to evaluating the provision of the service from libraries)

- General enquires (including Council Tax, Benefits, Parking and other service requests), which currently make up 35% of resident visits, are planned to be moved to Greenhill library subject to any planning and other legal requirements. Libraries already provide a wide range of general information to residents, so this is an extension of their use which has successfully been introduced in other Councils. In addition, our on-line services will continue to be enhanced to provide more readily available information in the way that is to be consumed by a growing number of residents. This library is only 1.5km distance from the current site and the equalities impact assessment concludes that the fully accessible Town Centre location provides a modern and welcoming facility ensuring a positive impact on service users.

- At present 15.56% of visits are to drop off documents and letters that are then verified, scanned and then returned to the resident. This service will be replaced through a self-scanning solution at Greenhill library with assistance for those for whom English may not be their first language or that may have other issues accessing technology.
- Currently 21.43% of visits to the Civic Centre are made by residents to make payments, mainly for Council tax and Housing. It is planned to move the Council to handling a minimum amount of cash through improving our on-line payment methods, making it easier for the residents to transact, handling cash through 3rd party vendors and moving any residual enquires on payments to the general information provision through libraries where assistance will be available for those groups who will find this transition difficult ..
- Casual visits (such as people using the toilet, picking up a local newspaper, staff collecting equipment) accounts for just under 20% of demand at Reception and this traffic will either disappear or move to Forward Drive when the Civic Centre closes.

4.5 Trade Unions

The Trade Unions (GMB and Unison) are considering two options on the Depot site for private work and interview space. Both these options will require capital investment. They will also be able to book work settings and meeting rooms within the main office block at Forward Drive in the same way that they currently have access to meeting rooms in the Civic Centre.

4.6 Storage

Departments have large amounts of non-paper storage that is needed for operational purposes, for example, car seats, cleaning stocks and emergency supplies. The proposal is to store these items that are needed regularly, but not necessarily daily, in a centralised storage facility. There is a unit available at the depot that can be utilised for this purpose. It has the advantage of providing easy drop off and pick up access at the main location for staff.

4.7 Work requiring capital investment is needed to complete the internal structure, install access control and fit secure storage cages over two storeys.

4.8 3rd Party Tenants

In discussions with integrated services, such as the CCG or CNWL, it has been agreed in principle that they can be incorporated into the agile model for occupancy in the new build at Forward Drive and therefore there is no need to provide them with dedicated separate space.

4.9 Other 3rd party tenants, such as the police and Relate, have decided in principle to find their own, alternative accommodation so there is no need for the Council to provide other space.

5.0 The existing tenancy arrangements with third parties at the Depot have been reviewed and will largely be re-instated in units across the site at a commercially appropriate rent. To accommodate the entire Council fleet and maximise space

for Council use, notice to quit has been issued to Barnet Council. To smooth the transition for their vehicles and office space, it is planned that temporary accommodation will be provided at the Driving centre site by Byron Leisure Centre, until such time as vacant possession is required for the Byron Quarter Development. Vehicle parking and office accommodation for integrated service partners will be re-provided at the Depot site.

5.1 Citizens Advice Bureau

To allow the Milton Road development to commence in early 2022, which provides for 39 affordable homes (subject to planning permission), the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has moved temporarily to Civic 6 ground floor.

5.2 In discussions with CAB it has been agreed in principle that Unit 1 of Sheldon House, Gayton Road would be a suitable permanent solution for their accommodation needs. This would be fitted out to their specification to best meet the requirements of their volunteers and visitors. Shared services such as air handling, IT network, security and utilities would be provided across unit 1 and 2 to reduce project costs and to provide greater efficiencies in the running costs.

5.3 The cost for this fit-out would be £510k (total cost). The associated procurement is covered below in the Emergency Resident Facing Services section.

5. Services and Functions Moving to Temporary Accommodation

5.1 As part of the Accommodation Strategy a new but smaller, Civic Centre (the Harrow New Civic – HNC) will be built by 2025. The HNC will accommodate several services and functions that need to move from the current Civic Centre. However, as the Civic Centre needs to be closed by October 2022, they will need to be moved to temporary accommodation until the HNC is built.

5.2 Emergency Resident facing services

Several emergency services to vulnerable residents are currently provided from the current Civic Centre. These services are not considered suitable to move to the current People Services' estate because of the unplanned and complicated nature of the presenting resident needs. Eventually they will move to the HNC.

5.3 The services that fall into this category include, Integrated Learning Disabilities, urgent social care for Children and Adults and Homelessness. Such is the close link between the 'emergency' services provided by People Services and Housing, it is considered beneficial to residents to co-locate them in a purpose-built space. It is proposed that a centralised unit known as the 'Emergency Front Door' be established. This facility will need a temporary location until such time as they can be moved to the new Civic building. The proposal is to use a unit on the ground floor of Sheldon House, Gayton Road subject to lease arrangements being agreed. This location is considered to be suitable and the attached Equality Impact Assessment considers the impact on protected groups of this move.

5.4 The units in Sheldon House are currently built to a standard of shell and core. To allow occupation of the Emergency Front Door, the site needs Category A and Category B build works completed which is costed at £675k (total cost). Works are needed to provide reception, private interview space, back-office space, toilet facilities (including a changing place facility), access control, air flow management, heating and cooling.

5.5 As this is a temporary move, it is proposed to re-use existing furniture wherever possible, so the budgeted cost for new furniture is £30k.

5.6 Register Office

5.7 An alternative temporary location is needed for the Register Office, providing licensed ceremony space, private interview facilities and back-office accommodation, prior to its move to HNC. The proposal is to relocate the service to Greenhill Library and Pavilion. Limited build works are expected to be required to accommodate the Register Office, but it will need to be licenced, a process that can take up to 9 months, and as the service has ceremonies booked through the summer it is proposed that the service remains in Civic 1 until September 2022. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and it is considered that there is a neutral impact on those using the services.

5.8 Mayor's Parlour

Forward Drive is not considered to be suitable for the function of the Mayor's parlour and alternative arrangements are being made to provide rooms in Harrow Arts Centre (HAC) for meetings, entertaining and similar events until the parlour can be moved to the new Civic building. In addition, the intention is for the gallery space to be used for larger events, which will be fitted in alongside the exhibition space used for local artists.

5.9 Some of the heritage items, currently displayed in the Civic Centre and intended to be in the new Civic Centre when built, will be relocated to the HAC along with the mayoral paraphernalia for the purposes of public display and safe storage.

6.0 Full Council Meetings

Until the completion of the HNC in 2025, full Council meetings from October 2022 will need to be held at an alternative venue. Elliot Hall at the HAC provides significant capacity for such events and has the required seating options, lighting and audio facilities. Equipment for webcasting of the meeting would be installed as appropriate for each meeting. If there were conflicts between Council meeting dates and other bookings, the Kadwar Patidar Centre could also be used.

6.1 Cabinet and Committee Meetings

Temporary accommodation, prior to the move to the new Civic building, is required for Cabinet, and Committee Meetings. Cabinet and most Committee meetings held in the evenings can be accommodated in Forward Drive in the large area adjacent to the entrance (the café) which has flexibility in how it can be laid out. It is planned to move the new audio visual currently in the Civic Centre Council Chamber to this space

- 6.2 As this facility is provided at ground floor level, security of the workspace on the upper floors can be maintained by access control and on-site security management when such space is utilised for public access. Only one meeting of this nature can be scheduled at a time so there will need to be alternative spaces booked if there are diary clashes. The nearby Kadwar Patidar Centre provides a range of meeting facilities that will be booked by Democratic Services as a suitable alternative.
- 6.3 Small meetings where the public attend by invitation, and therefore security can be maintained, can be held within the Forward Drive offices in upper floor meeting rooms. School Admission appeals would fall into this category.
- 6.4 Although Forward Drive has the potential flexibility to support the need for large scale statutory appeals or investigations, it would likely have a significant impact on Council operations and as these can happen at any time separate arrangements will be needed. The proposal is to establish a call off arrangement with an external provider to keep space available for the Council to use as and when it is needed. This will only be required for the time between the Civic Centre closure and Harrow New Civic being opened, as this type of facility will be incorporated into the design of the new building.
- 6.5 Members' Group Office and General Working Space**
Pre-cabinet and committee meetings could be held in the meeting rooms on the upper floors ahead of the public sessions held on the ground floor. Additionally, Members can book meeting rooms in the Forward Drive office space as required and there will be other space in council buildings across the Borough which will be available.
- 6.6 Discussions are currently on-going as to how Group Offices can be provided in Forward Drive. Allocation of specific rooms has been proposed.

5. Staff Travel and Parking

- 5.1 The Transportation Consultancy has been commissioned to evaluate the number of active essential car users, likely travel patterns of staff, the availability of parking spaces and other modes of transport with the aim to produce a sustainable travel plan for staff working in the borough. Their work will concentrate on promoting modal shift, providing sustainable alternatives for staff to travelling to work by car as the borough aims to meet the objectives of the green travel plan.
- 5.2 Measures likely to be considered by the Travel plan include pool cars (likely to be all electric vehicles) to be available for staff use, identifying all potential transport links across the sites, and improved bike hire access across the borough. An impact assessment will be completed as part of this exercise to ensure matters of equality are duly considered.
- 5.3 Although reduced by comparison to the Civic Complex, car parking is available at Forward Drive with the addition to the Depot of a multi-storey facility providing

at least 120 secure parking spaces. There are also 6 accessible parking bays outside the front of the building and 13 spaces for visitors. Based on agile working patterns this will be sufficient for staff and for Members' needs. There will also be sufficient space for evening meeting requirements.

- 5.4 The Gayton Road site has on-site parking available to the units and although there are no on-site facilities at Greenhill library it has excellent public transport links and is close to St Anne's Car park.

6. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- 6.1 The wellbeing of staff has been a central consideration to the selection and design of all the sites proposed in the Accommodation Strategy.

- 6.2 At Forward Drive in particular, measures have been taken to demonstrate this, including:

- Along with sections of replacement road surfaces, the existing street lighting system will be replaced with a new lighting scheme that ensures appropriate lighting levels with good uniformity across the depot
- Designated footpaths and pedestrian crossings on all routes and links across the site enhanced by specific illuminated bollards along the footpath leading from the pedestrian entrance off Kenmore Road through to the new office entrance
- Full CCTV camera coverage and on-site 24/7 security team
- On site secure parking for staff and visitors including accessible spaces
- Extensive changing and shower facilities for all staff
- First aid room including space for returning mothers
- Multi-faith room with Wu-du washing facilities
- On site café and large seating area on the ground floor and centralised tea points and adjacent seating on the upper floors
- Mix of work settings provided with 50% sit/stand adjustability, ergonomic and adjustable task chairs, breakout space and soft seating for taking time away from a desk

- 6.3 In preparation for occupancy of Forward Drive, and through engagement with forums like DAWN, staff will be engaged to test out the new furniture (COVID permitting) with demonstrations of the new task chair being a priority, ensuring everyone is able to adjust it to meet their DSE requirements. Individuals requiring reasonable adjustments will also be guided through a process that meets their needs from an occupational health and comfort perspective.

- 6.4 Similar processes will be rolled out in the ancillary spaces and consideration will also be given to public access for residents.
- 6.5 Individual Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for all new or changed locations, evaluating the impacts on each of the protected characteristics. The overall impact is expected to be largely positive, particularly in Forward Drive. The physical measures implemented need to complement the broader policy measures introduced by the Great People, Great Culture Programme.

Relevant risk assessments will be completed or updated for all buildings.

7. Ward Councillors' comments

A briefing was held to consult with Ward Councillors for those wards where the specific, relevant services not being accommodated in Forward Drive will be located. The feedback was very supportive with appreciation that the locations will bring additional benefits to residents.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 As a new development, Sheldon House was built to the latest environmental standards required by law and the Council's occupation of the ground floor units will reflect this. Similarly, the Greenhill Library site was completed in 2020 and is designed to maximise natural daylight and circulation space.
- 8.2 The work planned to encourage modal shift in staff travel, promoting more sustainable options will contribute to improving environmental targets and ambitions.
- 8.3 The existing buildings on the Civic Centre complex are not energy efficient, have considerable challenges with infrastructure and are much bigger than is required for the Council use. The closure of the site is making way for transformative development schemes bringing new public realm, green space and homes to the borough. These projects will be designed to be considerate of the environment and have sustainability as a key success factor.

9. Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **Yes** – project risk registers are created and are managed by the respective programme boards.

The relevant risks contained in the registers are summarised in the table below.
No

The following key risks should be taken onto account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
By not adopting the plans for ancillary space, the Council will be unable to close the Civic Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the recommendation of this report To maintain service delivery in the Civic Centre (albeit in concentrated locations) until such time as the new spaces are ready 	Amber
Reduced level of car parking impacts the agility of the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff parking and / or appropriate permits to be provided on sites for those likely to need it for their jobs Travel plan to assess current requirements and the trend for modal shift Improved cycle and footpath links across the borough as part of the borough wide transport strategy 	Amber
Public access to Council Services becomes confused and unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear communications with staff to provide clarity of intention and changes that impact them Campaign to provide clarity to the public To provide certainty of timescale 	Amber
Removal of means for residents to pay Council in cash (or with cards if this is the case) leads to a reduction in income and an increase in bad debts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is planned to move the Council to handling a minimum amount of cash through improving our on-line payment methods, making it easier for the residents to transact, handling cash through 3rd party vendors and moving any residual enquires on payments to the general information provision through libraries 	Amber
Dissemination of services leads to increased travel/journeys for residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A benefit from most of the dissemination is that the service is delivered closer to community and joined up with other services residents currently use. Campaign to provide clarity to the public Improved cycle and footpath links across the borough as part of the borough wide transport strategy Improving online services 	Amber
Loss of income from Barnet Council has a detrimental impact on the revenue budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated loss £182k. To be managed within the overall principal of all running costs to be contained within the net revenue budget of £1.833m. 	Amber
New license for Register Office not obtained in time for move to Greenhill Library and Pavilion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can take up to 9 months – the process has been initiated Engagement with the GRO and review of the design of the space 	Amber
The total cost of the capital works to deliver all the ancillary sites detailed in this report exceeds the £1.5m cap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget monitoring Project Management Capital plans must be value engineered down to fit within the budget envelope 	Amber
The spread of services across the borough increases running costs for the estate leading to the revenue budget of £1.833m being insufficient to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two sources of one-off income have been identified that can be used to support running costs as there will be some dual running costs during the transition period Effective budget monitoring 	Amber

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
cover the day to day running costs of Forward Drive, the ancillary sites (some of which are temporary until they move into the HNC) and the HNC when completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review FM service delivery model 	

10. Procurement Implications

- 10.1 The value of the procurement of a contractor to undertake category A and B fitout work to allow the Citizen Advice Bureau and the Council's emergency front door services to be able to move in requires cabinet approval but is under the financial threshold values of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. However, a compliant procurement process will be undertaken to identify and appoint a suitably qualified design and build company to undertake the work.
- 10.2 Additionally, as has been stated in the recommendations and the body of the report, there are also a number of lower value procurements that will be required for the ancillary sites. These procurements will also be undertaken compliant with the Public Contract Regulations and the Contract Procedure Rules.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 Under the Local Government act 1972 the public have a right to attend formal Committee meetings of the Council except where there are exempt items being discussed.
- 11.2 In certain circumstances public notices and documents need to be displayed at the Council's principal office.
- 11.3 Sheldon House**
Sheldon House formed part of the Fairview Homes Lexicon Development which retained the freehold but provided the Council with a 999-year lease and the Council having granted an underlease (of which there are approximately 8 years remaining) to Concilium LLP.
- 11.4 The commercial space (ground floor units) is still owned by the LLP, and subject to agreement a further underlease is required to effectively transfer the commercial space from the LLP back to the council. This will then enable the council to grant tenancies or further underleases of the individual units.
- 11.5 The Local Planning Authority has confirmed that both units are appropriate for the intended use as both are designated as Class E.

11.6 The procurement for the fit out works at two commercial units on the ground floor of Sheldon House, Gayton Road as well as the requirement for low value tender exercises for other ancillary site fit-outs shall be undertaken in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations (2015) (as amended) and the Procurement Principles of fairness, non-discrimination and transparency. HB Law will support the process and ensure it complies with the law and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

11.7 Greenhill Library

The existing 999-year lease of part for the Library Facilities from 51 College Road LLP permits use of the Pavilion for the purposes of Register office business (between the hours of 08.00 and 22.00).

12. Financial Implications

12.1 The Accommodation Strategy Report, approved by Cabinet in May 2021, detailed the financial implications of the Council's accommodation strategy being based at Forward Drive, including the suitable fit out of an agile workspace for staff. The report approved total budget provision of £6.265m which covered £5.540m additional capital budget for the fit out of Forward Drive to support agile working and £725k revenue funding to fund ancillary space requirements (£500k) and to manage decant (£225k).

12.2 Capital

It was always envisioned that a level of fit out would be required for Sheldon House, Gayton Road. and, for this reason, a provision is already included in the Capital Programme. There is a capital budget in the 2021/22 programme for £2.293m.

12.3 This report makes reference to various estimated capital sums required to deliver the ancillary sites including the emergency front door (£675k) and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) (£510k). The total cost of the capital works to deliver all the ancillary sites detailed in this report, not just the emergency front door and CAB, is capped at a maximum of £1.5m with all efforts being made to deliver under this cap For clarity, the ancillary sites requiring capital works are detailed in this report as Trade Unions, storage, Citizens Advice Bureau, emergency resident facing services, Registry Office, and Mayors Parlour This cap includes all costs, including architect fees, construction, fit out and contingencies. If the sums are expected to exceed £1.5m, then capital plans must be value engineered down to fit within the budget envelope, there is no further capital capacity for existing ancillary sites, or any future ones identified.

12.4 After accounting for the £1.5m, the balance on the capital budget of £2.293m, £793k, will be moved to the HNC capital budget and this will be accounted for as part of the Financial Capital Programme report to Cabinet in February 2022.

12.5 Revenue

The creation of new ancillary sites will naturally incur additional day to day running costs, including business rates. Due to the financial challenges across

the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, there is no additional revenue budget available to fund the ancillary sites and the overall principle that costs must be contained within the net revenue budget of £1.833m, allocated to running the existing Civic Centre and Depot, must be adhered to. If this cannot be adhered to, equivalent savings will have to be identified. Therefore, the working assumption is that the revenue budget of £1.833m must cover the day to day running costs of Forward Drive, the ancillary sites (some of which are temporary until they move into the HNC) and the HNC when completed. This is a significant period of transition as the Council moves off the existing Civic Centre site to Forward Drive and the ancillary sites, both in terms of timings and new operating models required to support the agile working environment. There will naturally be some dual running costs as services decant from the Civic Centre and the new operating models will evolve as the transition process proceeds which will inform the new running costs budgets required, repeating that the overall working assumption is that the existing revenue budget will cover all new sites.

12.6 Accepting that there will be some dual running costs during the transition period, there are two sources of one-off funding that can be used to support such costs:

- An application has been submitted to the Valuation Office for a business rates refund as a result of taking out of use a number of spaces within the Civic Centre. The refund is estimated to be received around September. It is estimated to be between £300k to £500k, subject to confirmation.
- As referenced at the start of this financial implications section, there is a one-off revenue provision of £500k to support ancillary sites as agreed by Cabinet in May 2021. The breakdown of this provision is £500k for ancillary sites, £200k for moves management and £25k for storage.

12.7 This report makes reference to potential external spaces that may need to be called upon for full council meetings, Cabinet and Committee meetings and Member Group Office and general working space. Use of such external space will incur additional revenue costs, and these must be contained within the £1.833m existing revenue budget and the one-off revenue sources identified in the previous paragraph.

12.8 The section of this report, titled '3rd Party Tenants', makes reference to the notice to quit which has been issued to Barnet for part of the space they occupy at Forward Drive. The loss of income is estimated at £152k and will have to be managed within the overall net budget of £1.833m.

13. Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

13.1 The introduction of new settings for staff and visitors will be created in line with current regulations and Council standards, including all reference to Equalities. The Depot Refurbishment project has an existing Equalities Impact assessment that will be reviewed and updated before occupancy commences. An initial

EQIA assessments for the ancillary spaces is attached to this report and it will be updated as detail design commences.

14. Council Priorities

- 14.1 The Council's Accommodation Strategy, will help deliver a flexible and agile workforce working in a range of venues, including the Council's principal buildings which will be modern, environmentally efficient buildings. The strategy will help improve performance allowing a flexible approach to service delivery and allowing staff to optimise their working time and practices.
- 14.2 Fundamentally the provision of ancillary space enables the closure of the Civic Centre and corresponding development on the Poet's Corner site, helping the economy of Wealdstone and bringing a net increase in spend to the borough. During the construction period of the planned development additional spend and opportunities will arise in the area.
- 14.3 The proposal to build affordable housing units contributes to the Council's ambition to build homes and this will also bring health and well-being benefits with it. The Milton Road Development is the first step to providing additional affordable housing that is both enabled and supported by the plans laid out in this report.
- 14.4 While there is reduction in the parking available across the borough as a direct consequence of the developments planned by the HSDP, this helps take a step towards greener transport opportunities in line with the targets for addressing climate change.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed by the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 17 January 2022

Statutory Officer: Jessica Farmer

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 18 January 2022

Chief Officer: Charlie Stewart

Signed off by the Corporate Director

Date: 17 January 2022

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta

Signed by the Head of Procurement

Date: 17 January 2022

Head of Internal Audit: Susan Dixon

Signed by the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 13th January 2022

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: YES

EqlA carried out: YES

EqlA cleared by: Jessica Farmer & Shumaila Dar

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

- Julian Wain, Interim Commercial Director - julian.wain@harrow.gov.uk - 07881 349175
- Charlie Stewart, Corporate Director Resources – charlie.stewart@harrow.gov.uk -
- Rebecca Drinkwater, Accommodation Projects Manager – rebecca.drinkwater@harrow.gov.uk - 07720 772823

Background Papers:

- [Cabinet Report on the Accommodation Strategy in May 2021](#)

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

NO