



17 December 2012

Agenda Item: 10(d)

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR TRANSPORT, PROPERTY &
ENVIRONMENT**

**THE GILSTRAP CENTRE, CASTLE GATE, NEWARK - PROPOSED "LEASE
IN"**

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to the terms of a new "Lease In" of the Gilstrap Centre, Castle Gate, Newark, for use as Registrar's premises for the town.
2. To seek approval to minor variations to the terms of the existing "lease in" of the existing Registrar's Office at Balderton Gate, Newark.

Information and Advice

3. Some information relating to this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Having regard to the circumstances, on balance the public interest in disclosing the information does not outweigh the reason for exemption because divulging the information would significantly damage the Council's commercial position. The exempt information is set out in the confidential Exempt Annex.
4. The Registrar's Service for Births, Deaths and Marriages for the Newark area currently operates out of premises leased from Newark and Sherwood District Council in Balderton Gate in the town. The service has been trying to secure relocation premises for some time in order to improve service provision to the public.
5. It is proposed to take a new "lease in" of the Gilstrap Centre, which is situated in the grounds of Newark Castle. The Gilstrap Centre is an ornate and elegant listed building dating principally from Victorian times, with a sympathetic 1930s extension. The Castle and its grounds are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The building is owned by a charitable organisation, The Gilstrap Charity. Newark and Sherwood District Council [NSDC] are the sole Trustees of the Gilstrap Charity. The premises are currently used by NSDC [under lease from the Charity] as a Tourist Information Centre [TIC] and historical interpretation centre. It is understood that NSDC intend to relocate the TIC elsewhere in the town [location and timing uncertain] and some of the historical interpretation artefacts on display will be relocated to the town's new Civil War visitor attraction. NSDC intend to relocate those items more directly related to the castle itself elsewhere within the castle buildings. This will mean that the Gilstrap Centre will shortly be vacant, providing an ideal opportunity for its use by the County Council Registrar's Service.
6. In accordance with Charity Commission rules, the maximum lease available to the County Council for this building at the present time is 7 years. The terms of the proposed letting are outlined in the Exempt Annex. The income generated by the proposed lease to the

County Council will be used towards the charitable aims and objectives of The Gilstrap Charity.

7. Some adaptation / modernisation of the building will be needed to make the property fit for use by the Registrars service and this work will be carried out by the County Council, subject to all necessary statutory consents, including works to a Listed Building and [if required by English Heritage] works to the Scheduled Ancient Monument. These works are currently in their design stage, and a planning application can be expected by the turn of the year.
8. Assuming all necessary consents are in place by the end of March 2013, it is proposed that the lease will commence on 1st April 2013. This will allow the Registrar functions to be operational by 1st September 2013. NSDC will allow the County Council to have flexible occupation of the existing premises in Balderton Gate until the relocation is completed, ensuring continuity of the statutory functions of the Registrar's Service during the relocation. This will also allow for any slippage caused by possible delays to the statutory consents required before work can start at The Gilstrap Centre.
9. Once the relocation has taken place, the County Council will surrender its tenancy at Balderton Gate back to NSDC.

Other Options Considered

10. Operationally, The Gilstrap Centre represents the best available location for the Registrar's service in the town. The unique character and location of the building provide an outstanding opportunity to improve facilities to users of the Service, especially in the provision of wedding services.
11. Charity Commission rules make leasing the only realistic property solution for the building at this time, and a 7 year lease term is the maximum achievable under those rules

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

12. To allow relocation of the Registrar's Service to a new venue capable of delivering improved facilities for service users

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the terms for the new lease in of The Gilstrap Centre be approved. thus allowing the relocation of the Registrar's Service to this venue.
- 2) That the terms of the minor modifications to the lease on the existing lease at Balderton Gate be approved, so as to facilitate the relocation of the Registrar's service and the timely and orderly vacation of the existing premises.

Jas Hundal
Service Director – Transport, Property & Environment

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Ian Brearley 07775 541 641

Constitutional Comments (CEH 23.11.12)

14. Finance and Property Committee can approve the recommendations set out in the report.

Financial Comments (CS 28.11.12)

15. The cost of the lease of the Gilstrap Centre (and associated running costs) would fall to the Registrar's Service.

Provision exists under the Way of Working Programme for dilapidations at Balderton Gate.

Background Papers

16. Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

17. Ward(s): Newark West
Member(s): Cllr Keith Girling

File ref.: /IB/SL/
SP: 2345
Properties affected: 03022 - Gilstrap Centre(formerly Newark Library)
00011 - Balderton Gate