



**20 January 2014**

**Agenda Item: 9(c)**

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

**CENTENARY HOUSE, WILFORD LANE, WEST BRIDGFORD - DISPOSAL**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To note the outcome of the latest round of marketing of Centenary House.
2. To seek approval to the terms for disposal of the property as detailed in the exempt appendix.

**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 Some information relating to this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.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 exempt appendix.
4. Centenary House was a County office property which has been declared surplus to the operational needs of the Authority and which can be sold. The property was originally vacated in early 2012 but has subsequently been reoccupied to allow for the temporary relocation of staff displaced by the Ways of Working reorganisation of the West Bridgford campus, including the refurbishment works at County Hall. These temporary occupations continued until August 2013, since when the property has been vacant.
5. At its meeting on 17 September 2012, Finance and Property Committee approved the sale of the property on a conditional contract. However, the selected party failed to perform and did not exchange contracts. That party withdrew from negotiations in June 2013.
6. Following the withdrawal of the previous party and the subsequent vacation of the building following the temporary re-occupation by various Council departments, a further re-marketing exercise has been undertaken for the property. The outcomes of that re-marketing are detailed in the Exempt Appendix.

7. Of the various offers received for the property following the most recent re-marketing, one of these offers is considered to represent best value to the Council and is recommended for approval; detailed Heads of Terms for that offer are outlined in the exempt appendix.
8. The County Council is incurring “holding costs” in relation to the empty building, principally empty property rates. These costs are summarised in the Exempt Appendix. The Council’s appointed rating consultants (GR Gerald Eve) are exploring ways to mitigate the empty rates liability. Once the Committee decision on disposal is known, attempts will be made to secure short term income opportunities from the building pending completion of any disposal.

### **Other Options Considered**

9. Retention of the property for continued Council use. This has been looked at but no on-going use requirement exists. The property is surplus to the operational needs of the Council and represents an opportunity to secure a capital receipt for the Council.
10. Lease of the Property in whole or part: this would be an achievable alternative to sale, but demand for letting of office accommodation of this type in the West Bridgford is very modest at the present time, and there is a high risk of significant void (empty) accommodation. As such, disposal is considered to be the better option for the Council. Once the decision of Committee is known, attempts will be made to secure short term rental income on the property pending completion of any disposal, but demand is sparse and this is unlikely to represent a significant opportunity to the Council.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

11. To secure the disposal of a surplus property and to enable a capital receipt by the County Council.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working 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) To note the outcome of the latest round of marketing of Centenary House.
- 2) To seek approval to the terms for disposal of the property as detailed in the exempt appendix.

**Jas Hundal**  
**Service Director – Transport, Property & Environment**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Ian Brearley 07775 541641**

### **Constitutional Comments (CEH 13.12.13)**

13. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Finance and Property Committee by virtue of its terms of reference. When disposing of its land the Council is required to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the open market and the Committee should satisfy itself of this when making a decision.

### **Financial Comments (TR 18.12.13)**

14. The financial implications are set out in the exempt appendix to the report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

15. None.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

16. Ward(s): West Bridgford West  
Member(s): Councillor Gordon Wheeler

File ref.: /IB/SB/  
SP: 2565  
Properties affected: 00234 - Centenary House