



Meeting Agenda

Policy & Service Review Scrutiny Committee (Call-In) Town Hall, Lytham St. Annes 14 December 2006, 5:45pm

The scheduled Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee meeting for the same evening will commence after a short break following the conclusion of this call-in meeting.

POLICY & SERVICE REVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN

Raymond Norsworthy

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Martin Taylor

Councillors

Stephen Carpenter

Elizabeth Oades

Maxine Chew

Dawn Prestwich

Elizabeth Clarkson

Fabian Wilson

John Longstaff

Contact: Lyndsey Lacey, St. Annes (01253) 658504
Email: lyndseyl@fylde.gov.uk



CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Council's investment and activities are focused on achieving our five key objectives which aim to :

- Conserve, protect and enhance the quality of the Fylde natural and built environment
- Work with partners to help maintain safe communities in which individuals and businesses can thrive
- Stimulate strong economic prosperity and regeneration within a diverse and vibrant economic environment
- Improve access to good quality local housing and promote the health and wellbeing and equality of opportunity of all people in the Borough
- Ensure we are an efficient and effective council.

CORE VALUES

In striving to achieve these objectives we have adopted a number of key values which underpin everything we do :

- Provide equal access to services whether you live in town, village or countryside,
- Provide effective leadership for the community,
- Value our staff and create a 'can do' culture,
- Work effectively through partnerships,
- Strive to achieve 'more with less'.



AGENDA

ITEM	PAGE
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: <i>In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.</i>	4
2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS: <i>Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 26.3</i>	4
3. CALL-IN REQUEST – ACCOMODATION REPORT	5 – 22

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEMOCRATIC AND MEMBER SERVICES	POLICY AND SERVICE REVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	14 DECEMBER 2006	3

CALL-IN REQUEST – ACCOMMODATION REPORT

Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

Ten members of the council have invoked the recovery and call-in procedure to question a decision of the Cabinet made on 15 November 2006 relating to accommodation. Members of the committee must therefore consider whether the decision is in the interests of the inhabitants of the borough. If they believe that it is not, they may refer it to the cabinet or full council for further consideration.

Recommendations

Members are invited to discuss whether the information provided illustrates that the decisions taken by Cabinet on accommodation at its meeting held on 15 November 2006 were not made in the interests of the inhabitants of the borough.

Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:
Finance and Efficiency: Paul Rigby

Report

1. If ten councillors feel that a decision taken by or on behalf of the Cabinet is not in accordance with the interests of the inhabitants of the Borough, they can ask for it to be 'recovered'. A recovered decision cannot be implemented until the Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee has decided whether to call it in or not. Ten councillors have made such a request relating to the accommodation report which was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 15th November, therefore at this stage the decisions in

relation to the accommodation issue are termed as being recovered (i.e. cannot be implemented).

2. The “recovery” request from the Councillors, an extract of the Cabinet minutes and the related agenda item are all attached as appendices.
3. The Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee has three options.
4. The first is to call-in the decision by asking the Cabinet to reconsider it. The second is to call-in the decision by asking the full council to look at it. Full council could then decide to ask the Cabinet to re-consider the decision if it feels it appropriate. The committee could take either of these two options if it felt that the decision being questioned is not in the interests of the inhabitants of the Borough and ought to be reconsidered. The third option is for the Committee to take no further action.
5. It is suggested that the meeting is conducted in the following order:
 - Councillor Mrs. Oades be invited to outline why she and her fellow councillors feel that the decisions of the Cabinet on the 15th November relating to accommodation were not made in the interests of the inhabitants of the borough
 - A representative of the Cabinet to respond
 - Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee members to question both members and officers to aid them in their judgement
 - Conclusion reached on whether to call-in the decision or otherwise
 - If it is decided not to call in the decision the Committee is requested to state its reasoning in reaching this decision
 - If it decided to call-in the decision the Committee should decide where the matter should be referred and set out its concerns, which the Cabinet or council should have regard to

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None arising directly from this report
Legal	None arising directly from this report
Community Safety	None arising directly from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising directly from this report
Sustainability	None arising directly from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising directly from this report

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Tracy Scholes	(01253) 658521	7 December 2006	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Documents as listed below		Council office or website address

Attached documents

1. Call in request
2. Relevant Cabinet minute
3. Extract of related Agenda item



'CALL-IN' REQUEST

I wish to register a request for the following decision to be called in for reconsideration prior to implementation. My objection to the decision and alternative decision/proposal are set out below.

Decision Title: **Accommodation**

Decision number **11**

Date of decision:

15	11	2006
-----------	-----------	-------------

Nine other Fylde Borough Councillors who are named below and have signed this request support me in my call-in request

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Councillor S Wall	Consent of signatories verified by Democratic and Member Services Manager
Councillor L. Nulty	
Councillor H. Henshaw	
Councillor K. Wright	
Councillor K. Henshaw	
Councillor H Wilson	
Councillor R Wilson	
Councillor S. Mason	
Councillor D. Lancaster	

The Objection and Alternative Decision/Proposal

Remember: The objection needs to state how you believe the decision wasn't taken in accordance with the interests of the residents of Fylde Borough

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary (500 words maximum)

The Objection is:

That, in view of the important and far reaching effects that any capital or revenue spend may have on the Council's future budget requirements, that the decision on future issues on funding the Council's accommodation project be dealt with by the relevant O. & S Committee and, thereafter, the full Council.

The alternative decision/proposal is: (Optional)

--

--

Lead Councillor Personal Details

Name (Please print)	Councillor Elizabeth Oades
Address	54 Ribby Road, Kirkham, Preston, Pr4 2ba
Daytime contact number	01772 671343
Email	cllr.eoades@fylde.gov.uk
Signature	

Call-in Checklist

Please ensure you can tick every box of the 'Have You' list below before handing in the request

Have You?	Please Tick
Read the guidance notes on the call-in procedure?	✓
Clearly stated the decision title the call-in refers to?	✓
Stated the date the decision was made on?	✓
Attained the signatures from nine other Councillors to support the call-in?	✓
Stated in the objection box how this decision is not in the interests of the residents of the borough.	✓
Read where to send this request?	✓

Completed requests should be sent to the Democratic Services and Member Support Executive Manager, Town Hall, Lytham St. Annes, Lancashire FY8 1LW and received by no later than 6 working days from the date when the minutes were published

EXTRACT OF CABINET MINUTES – 15 NOVEMBER 2006

11. Accommodation

Councillor Paul Rigby, Cabinet portfolio holder for Finance and Efficiency presented the report of the Chief Executive, which provided an update on accommodation issues.

The Council had commissioned a draft proposal to provide 'fit for purpose' office and civic accommodation on the site of the Town Hall, St Annes.

The preferred scheme had been the subject of consultation with staff, members and key stakeholders.

This report provided a summary of the feedback received from that consultation and recommended that the detailed business case and procurement strategy be developed.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it at the meeting and RESOLVED-

1. That the responses to the consultation exercise be noted.
2. That the draft layout, which has been the subject of consultation, indicating the use of the ground floor of the Town Hall for civic purposes be pursued as the preferred scheme.
3. That officers proceed to commission work on the detailed business case and procurement strategy.
4. That current valuations be obtained of the portfolio of sites agreed by the Council for disposal.

(Prior to considering the above item the Cabinet considered a question submitted by Councillor Elizabeth Oades which asked in view of the large sum of money already expended on this project can we be assured that a decision to provide office and civic accommodation at the Town Hall site will not be taken until full costings are available to the full Council? -

The Cabinet discussed and responded to the issues raised in the question and it was reported that future issues on accommodation are delegated to be considered and determined by the Cabinet).

REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	CABINET	15 TH NOVEMBER 2006	11

ACCOMMODATION

Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

The Council has commissioned a draft proposal to provide 'fit for purpose' office and civic accommodation on the site of the Town Hall, St Annes.

The preferred scheme has been the subject of consultation with staff, members and key stakeholders.

This report provides a summary of the feedback received from that consultation and recommends that the detailed business case and procurement strategy be developed.

Recommendations

1. That the responses to the consultation exercise be noted.
2. That the draft layout, which has been the subject of consultation, indicating the use of the ground floor of the Town Hall for civic purposes be pursued as the preferred scheme.
3. That officers proceed to commission work on the detailed business case and procurement strategy.
4. That current valuations be obtained of the portfolio of sites agreed by the Council for disposal.

Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio: Finance and Efficiency : Councillor P Rigby

Report

1. The Council resolved (inter alia) in May to endorse the view of the Cabinet in retaining the Town Hall as the Council's primary office and civic accommodation, subject to all members being given the opportunity to comment on proposals for changes to the civic accommodation.
2. Following this resolution the Council's advisors produced a draft layout for the future configuration of accommodation on the Town Hall site which includes the following features:
 - Alteration of the ground floor layout of the Town Hall to provide dedicated civic usage including an expanded meeting chamber,
 - Demolition of the Chaseley building together with the ancillary structures to the rear of this,
 - Construction of a new 3 / 4 storey office building on the site of Chaseley with a ground floor link to the Town Hall,
 - Residential usage of the Town Hall above ground floor level, including separate access.
3. The draft layout has been the subject of consultation with Members, staff and other key stakeholders during August and September and a summary of comments received is attached at Appendix A.
4. Our advisors have also been working to evaluate the likely cost of this option, assess the procurement options open to the Council and outline a timetable by which the project could be delivered.
5. For information at this stage, the available procurement options for the Council include:
 - Private Developer Scheme
 - Traditional Procurement
 - Design and Build

Private Developer Scheme

6. In this option a contractual partnership is formed with a private developer, following a competitive process. The preferred developer takes ownership of the site and produces a building of his own detailed design and at his own risk but to the Council's general specification and the Council takes a lease on the accommodation.
7. The main advantage of this option is that it does not require any significant capital investment by the Council. However, it would mean that the Council becomes the tenant of the building rather than the owner and it commits the Council to ongoing revenue expenditure for the term of the lease.

Traditional Option

8. This option is the one which most people will be familiar with. The Council would define a proposed scheme on plans, produce a detailed specification of works and bills of quantity and competitively tender the work to obtain a cost for the work. The successful contractor will then build to the defined scheme at the rates contained within his tender.
9. This option requires more 'up front' work by the Council to ensure the specification and bills of quantity cover all detailed requirements. Any amendments or additions made to the agreed specification after works commence would incur additional cost at rates detailed in the accepted tender. However, the Council would retain close control over this process.

Design and Build Option

10. In this option the plans and specification provided by the Council would only be defined in very general terms. Contractors would be invited to submit their costed proposals on the basis of the generic specification and most of the detailed design work and selection of materials, building finishes etc. would be left to the contractor.
11. There are some advantages to be gained from this option in terms of timescales but a great amount of reliance is placed by the client (the Council) on the goodwill and openness of the contractor.
12. An intermediate option between the traditional and design and build options is also possible. This is known as the two-stage option and involves the preparation of plans, specification and a basic bill of quantities in the first stage of a competitive tender. From the initial stage two or three contractors are invited to submit more detailed (final) costed proposals before a successful contractor is selected. This ensures that competition is keen until a final award of contract is made.
13. Whichever procurement options is selected the Council needs to produce a detailed business case. A good deal of the work in establishing the business case for the project was carried out when the earlier option of developing a back-office building in Wesham was considered. This work will be carried forward and developed further in the revised business case for the current project.

Project Timetable

14. The project timetable prepared by the Council's advisors indicates that the procurement process will take several months and that a start on site could not be achieved realistically until the end of 2007 with completion being in spring 2009.

Project Funding

15. Current valuations of the sites agreed by the Council for disposal to fund the project, obtained in September 2005, suggest a potential 25% budget shortfall, however this does not take into account the valuation of the Town Hall site. The Council will therefore need to update these valuations to provide the reassurance that the inherent value in the portfolio of sites is sufficient to fund the project. An alternative would be for the Council to identify additional sites that could be made available for disposal to fill any funding shortfall.

16. Irrespective of the procurement option selected by the Council, the major capital funding requirement does not start to arise until the end of the 2007/08 financial year.

Comments and Analysis

17. The summary at Appendix A gives an indication of the range of comments received as a result of the consultation exercise. The vast majority are very supportive of the draft scheme. Some are of a very detailed nature and can be addressed as the project progresses to the detailed stages.
18. However, there were two comments of a more strategic nature to arise from the consultation exercise. Firstly, a suggestion that all the civic accommodation should be provided in the new-build structure, along with all office space, so that the internal architectural features of the old council chamber and the adjacent corridor and staircase could be left undisturbed.
Secondly, a suggestion that the new build accommodation (both office and civic) could be provided on the Public Offices site on Clifton Drive South, thereby freeing the Town Hall site fully for residential development.
19. The second of these suggestions is contrary to the Council resolution of May and has not been considered any further for this reason. However, the first of the suggestions has been investigated further. The overall project costs of this alternative are estimated to be of the same order as the scheme which has been consulted upon. Whilst the alternative option would generate additional capital receipts by making the ground floor of the Town Hall available for residential development in addition to the upper floors, Councillors would be giving up access to the historic ambiance of the Reception Room, Member's Room and Mayor's Parlour in addition to the enlarged and refurbished council chamber.
20. The refurbishment and enlargement of the council chamber will inevitably disturb some of the existing internal features and decorations. However, it will be possible in the specification of works to ensure that the new layout is sympathetic to the existing building features. The fitting out of the chamber would also be carried out to ensure a great degree of flexibility so that the room could be used for multiple purposes rather than just as a council chamber several times per year.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	Contained within the body of the report.
Legal	Appropriate legal advice has been sought and will continue to be sought on the implementation of this project.
Community Safety	None arising directly from the report.
Human Rights and Equalities	Accessibility to the Council's buildings is a significant consideration in relation to human rights and equalities.
Sustainability	The environmental sustainability of the proposed works will be considered within the project specification.
Health & Safety and Risk	The current layout and working relationships within the

Management	Town Hall and Chaseley would be improved by the implementation of this proposal.
------------	--

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
P Walker P Woodward	(01253) 658431	November 2006	h/cabinet/nov06accomm

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Various previous Cabinet & Council reports	Various	www.fylde.gov.uk

Attached documents

1. Summary of consultation feedback.

ACCOMMODATION PROPOSALS CONSULTATION FEEDBACK SEPTEMBER 2006

Officers

Concern as to how the Town Hall cellar would be accessed from the new office block (walking through reception with files?)

The plans deposited seem to have little regard for the requirements of part L Conservation of Fuel and Power.

Answer from Consultant: The current sketches are only meant to serve as an accommodation strategy and all parts of the Building Regs will be fully considered by the consultants at the appropriate times.

What the design team require now is approval to develop the feasibility study based on the strategy of;

- 1. The existing ground floor accommodation will become the civic suite*
- 2. The existing upper floors will have residential use*
- 3. and the back office requirements will be situated in a new building, replacing the existing annex*

The proposals make good business sense if the cost is covered by the sale of sections of the town hall for residential space. It can't possibly be a step backwards to the office accommodation at present.

Any market value units will require the provision of an additional affordable units- presumably off site at St David's Rd Nth. To meet the most pressing needs I would recommend the provision of 3 bed affordable accommodation (mews type houses?). The inclusion of mainly 1-bed flats in the Town Hall will, I think, reduce the attractiveness and value of the proposals. There will be an issue relating to sound transmission on the current plan. Building control may also be able to advise on this.

What are the plans for accommodation as regards the staff in Freedom House?
Does the new development at the Town Hall include us?

We note on the plan that it has not been decided where departments and staff will be located. Do we know that there will be enough room for everyone including adequate storage space? We have assumed that this work has already been completed by the various people that have visited our office counting and checking various items. With regard to the entrance being located on the Promenade we are not sure this is the best idea due to sand and gales in the winter months. Will this not add to maintenance and cleaning costs? What are the proposals for staff who currently work in the building that will be demolished? Will this involve staff working from home or will temporary accommodation be sought perhaps porter cabins? Has the impact on customer service and access been considered?

The new plans look like a very sensible option for a self-financing scheme which provides the dual-benefits of retaining the lovely town hall building and housing staff in office accommodation equipped for the 21st Century - good stuff!

Two bedroom apartments might be more sensible as I should have thought anyone wanting a flat in this location would want a spare room for visitors.

Also - as we have rented the wesham offices, has consideration been given yet to where will staff be located whilst the work is taking place? Look forward to seeing the next stage!

If the Mayor's parlour is only to be used for robing and storing the mayoral robe, chain etc. it could be a fraction of the size and an extra meeting room made instead. If the Members want to use it for a refreshment area they could use the members room instead so that they can sit. A second small meeting room at Town Hall would be appreciated as sometimes developers appreciate a separate room to discuss Planning proposals with confidential implications and the number of people attending such meetings makes use of Contact Centre interview rooms uncomfortable. A second Town Hall meeting room would be used when two such meetings are concurrent or overlap.

The proposed plans seem good. I look forward to the detailed plan, for example, how the new entrance will be adapted for the disabled, the location of the lifts to each floor and the toilets. Will the staff remain at the Town Hall during these alterations? Is there to be any improvement to staff car parking?

In the interest of equality and diversity is there any reason why we could not include a cresse facility on site? This would be self-funding and meet a high demand from staff. I think it should be included in the build (maybe as an annex) The Council should most certainly commission the service and look to making a profit. I was quite impressed with the facility provided at Warton Land Registry. At least it would bring us in line with modern working methods, valuing our employees and go some way to bring down sickness figures etc In terms of general accommodation will the Members Room have a proper library etc? I know that we are looking at open plan offices. What will be the position for member services (my section) when members come in to see us they struggle for seating etc.

If the plans do go ahead could it be considered for all of us who cycle to work to have a secure unit where we can leave our bikes rather than a stand which is out in the open.

Overall, I think that the plans for the new Town Hall accommodation are very good and tick all the boxes - the enlarged Council Chamber, disabled access and open plan offices for staff. However:

- Accommodation would be required for the garaging of the Mayoral car
- The view from the 'new' Mayor's Parlour is very poor - looks out over the bin store. Suggest the possibility of moving the Mayor's Parlour to the Members' Room. This would be much better and give the 'First Citizen of the Borough' a decent view over the sea. (The possible advantage of having a door in to the Chamber from the Parlour in the original plans would be negated but this would not be a great loss. There is a door from the existing Parlour through to the 'old' Council Chamber and I have never seen it used.)
- Suggest relocating the Member's Room to the area marked 'Office' on the proposed ground floor plan and this would mean that all the left-hand side would be civic rooms, which would make sense. The area originally marked Mayor's Parlour would then become Office accommodation.

Where are the toilet facilities on the ground floor of the Town Hall, or will facilities be provided at the ground floor level in the new block? Are there any implications of providing disabled toilet facilities for members of the public, currently we have these in close proximity to the reception desk. What will happen the period features/fittings e.g. the Town Hall staircase that may need to be removed? Will the planned residential apartments be sold on the open market or rented, if so to whom? What are the implications to the storage and display of the art collection?

Some issue for consideration:

- New build office block projects forward of building line. Historical vista through square & to pier is affected. *Planning matter.*
- Impact of massing of this building on existing streetscene and relationship to Braxfield Court. *Planning matter.*
- Apartments for 'luxury' views to some are extremely poor. Would return be sufficient?
- Affordable element of apartments Commuted sum – planning matter
- For quality apartments on promenade one would expect entrance on promenade – not "round the side/back".
- Residential access entrance – large wasted space with poor stair access.
- Ground floor civic suite – poor use of space – odd shaped areas at reception/exhibition
- Fire escape for chamber – appears unacceptable.
- Staff rest room, is this sufficient, as I cannot ascertain from the plan if this is just for member's suite or for all staff. I appreciate office accommodation layout has not been thought out yet.
- Accept corridor 'warren' in existing but could this be reduced.
- Offices in existence at ground floor, what is their use.
- Retention of quality tile/cornice/detail throughout where possible – presume these would be reintroduced where there are changes to structure. Careful thought to detailing required – high cost.
- Assume basement retained for FBC use – access by stairs adjacent to kitchen. Poor link to new offices.
- Storage of cleaning equipment etc. For the apartments communal areas is this included detail matter to resolve later.
- Presume natural lighting to exhibition space etc. Via rooflights where possible – energy use consideration
- Heating to entire existing block. At present the boiler room for the whole site is located under Chaseley – assume in the new build office block or existing town hall basement are apartments individually supplied – assume is case if so flue location would have to be given careful thought – impact on existing Porritt facades. *Planning matter.*
- Is air-conditioning for civic suite to be installed? Again the location of fan units etc. And the impact of noise on apartments. Is this detail to be resolved later on, but it requires thought early on.
- Car parking layouts – conflict with resident parking re: evening council meetings – detail to be resolved later but consideration needs thinking about.
- Due to existing room layouts on upper floors lots of corridor space, could with thought be reduced thus increasing residential space within units and hopefully assisting higher value.
- Possibility of residential unit in roof space has this been considered – may not be possible but worth a thought.
- Internal sub-division in office block?
- Are we sure that there is enough office space per employees / meeting space.

Members

My comments are - get on with it ASAP

I consider a decision to convert any part of the Town Hall into residential apartments to be a retrograde step emanating from economic incompetence over the past few years. Such a decision taken today will be viewed in horror in future years and is bound to denigrate the position of St. Annes Town Hall as the focal point of local democracy.

I have only one concern and that is whether we will be able to achieve the best valuation with the apartments the size that they are. I feel that some are too small for the price that is likely to be asked and in some instances bedrooms are not en-suite and some of the apartments at the back have poor views. Perhaps it would be possible to reduce the number of apartments but make those that remain more luxurious and more in keeping with the premier position that is being offered. An other alternative would be to extend the building to the south side approximately 3-4 metres and three stories high and that would then enable us to further enlarge the civic suite and retain the same amount of apartments but larger. I am pleased that you have decided to recommend a fixed seated civic suite for I feel that long term we will find it a better working environment.

My concern is the safety of the Town Hall (therefore Fylde) art treasures. With flats above, we need to make sure that there is some kind of protection, so that if a resident sets his flat on fire we have a fighting chance of saving our artwork - think £4 mil Fuseli. We need something between us and the flats that is an extra fire protection. My only other major concern is the protection and preservation of all the stained glass and unique tilework on the ground floor. Even if an area is going to change, we need to reclaim these items for future use in the building. Also, I am sad about the staircase, but some things can't be helped, I guess.

- I support the demolition of the Chaseley building which is shown for redevelopment as three storey offices. Maybe a reduced plan form (i.e. smaller site coverage) but a four-storey solution would reduce any adverse comment regarding building lines. It will then allow more space to view the existing Town Hall frontage, less encroachment upon the adjacent flats and provide the proposed new offices themselves with a better outlook.
- It is proposed to keep the Porritt Town Hall frontage building but not to use it for general staff accommodation. This seems sound in view of the levels and layout of the building.
- To use freestanding furniture within the Council Chamber will help provide for more press/officer/public seating. It will also widen the range of potential uses the room could be put to. Disabled access to this elevated ground floor level will not be easy. The one metre height above outside ground level will require 12/15 metres of access slope.
- The construction costings for the proposed flats will be very high. It is a pity the floor to ceiling heights are just insufficient to gain the advantages of mezzanine floors. Issues of car parking for Council staff and visitors will require resolution, as will the constructional arrangements. Is one contractor to execute the project?
- Is the Council to be involved in the commercial risks of flat development? The tenure and lifetime management issues involving flying freeholds, rights for services, roof, foundation and façade responsibilities will be complex, as will be the management and use of the grounds.
- It is possible that the costs of the Civic Suite will be higher than a new build solution taking into account the fire, access and separation requirements needed between the

residential and commercial uses within an existing traditional building with timber joists and floor boards. Should the question be asked 'why not allow the whole of the Town hall to be used just for residential accommodation? One suggestion for the Civic Suite is the roof space over the redeveloped Building (within a pitched roof with its gable facing the Majestic Flats).

- Are any of us aware of the exact accommodation requirements we need in the future? It is difficult to plan without this. Is Freedom House to be retained? Are certain Accounting staff to share resources, including accommodation, with an adjacent authority? Do we have a transport plan with off site/on site car parking requirements identified? How many essential users are there with a responsibility to have car transport available?
- To me the ultimate solution still centres around the two excellent sites the Council owns in St Annes Centre. The Town Hall and Public Offices site.
- Either of these sites can meet the accommodation needs, which are shown upon these August 2006 proposals now before us. Having outlined my thoughts regarding the Town Hall site which is the Cabinet's preferred option, let me, if I may, turn to the Public Offices site.
- Here we own a listed building where recently we have invested to provide a One Stop Shop Customer Service facility. I understand this building will be retained and the rest of the site cleared for redevelopment. To redevelop it for housing will, I believe, involve negotiations with the ground landlord. It could, provide approximately 2,500 sq. metres of new office accommodation in say a three storey L shaped plan. It has extensive car park facilities.
- In terms of efficiency and cost effectiveness, the development of modern offices at Clifton Drive, catering for all our current needs alongside the One Stop Shop, which we have committed ourselves to, will prevail. I expect it to have less value than the Town Hall site with a demolition opportunity for Chaseley. I expect the construction cost to be less. It involves almost no staff disturbance during construction. It is a better office site, less exposed to the elements and with good parking and access to town and transport facilities.
- Issues like parking for the Mayor's car, fixed or freestanding seating for the Council Chamber, toilets and ramps raise themselves in our minds. We require from our consultants clear facts and figures based upon the Chief Executive's confirmation of our needs for the foreseeable future.

Letter from St Annes Civic Society

Thank you for consulting with us on the re-development of the Town Hall. We are very pleased that it is not to be demolished, and we accept that some residential use could help the project to be more financially viable.

We regard the Town Hall as a significant building; the best of those built by Porritts the builders in the early years of the town. We are sure that, well restored, it can continue to be an important part of the “classic resort” of St Annes. We also accept that a new build office block on the “Chasely” site would solve problems of office space for the council.

We are pleased to see the retention of the ground floor rooms of the Town Hall for public use. However it would seem that the architects’ brief was only to retain two rooms intact, the reception room and its anteroom. This has led to the proposal to destroy practically all of the superb tile work, stained glass and woodwork in the vestibule and corridor area.

The reason for the destruction of this area appears to be the desire to extend the former council-debating chamber so that it will accommodate larger numbers. The new chamber would encompass the present Mayor’s parlour and the corridor behind it. Our architects advise that it would be a very expensive exercise in terms of structural alterations. Walls would be removed, yet chimney breasts retained on upper floors. We would argue that this is too expensive in terms of the building costs and the destruction of “heritage assets” - for a meeting which takes place on six evenings a year. The fact that the space can be used for other meetings is not relevant, as the main purpose of the re - construction of the room is clear.

We suggest the following options for the holding of six evening meetings a year:

The use of Lowther Pavilion. There are seen to be legal constraints on this usage and the council may not wish to pursue it. It is worth pointing out however that local objections to council usage were based on fears that the building would be altered substantially for council rather than community use, and that car parking would be needed on Lytham Green.

The provision of a flexible multi purpose space at ground floor level in the new block. A specially designed space with moveable screens/ seating could be very efficiently used.

There could be an additional (4th) floor on the new building to compensate for the loss of modern office space; This could be part residential - a penthouse flat or two could be sold at a premium by the builder. Access could be via a bridge across the atrium.

Lifts are not shown on the plans we have seen. We assume that there will be lifts for both the residential and office areas.

It is unclear now disabled access is achieved into the old part of the Town Hall, as the seaward entrance is to become the main one. The steps should be kept if possible. The atrium area would be unsuitable for any exhibition of the council’s art collection due to the light.

There is no point in deciding to retain a wonderful asset, full of decorative Minton tiles on floors and walls, elaborate cornices and stained glass - if these features are to be ripped

out. Ceilings and cornices are sure to be affected with the scale of the works required to alter the council chamber.

All the windows at the front of the present building have been replaced some years ago with very unsuitable and ugly UPVC. In recent years the manufacturers of these windows have taken more account of the importance of historic buildings. A sliding sash double glazed window is available in cream and we can give you details of it. The exterior presentation of the building would benefit greatly, and modern requirements be satisfied.

As to the rest of the building, to be converted into apartments, it will be essential to ensure that the developer retains as much of the above assets as possible. This includes windows, doors, architraves, skirting boards etc. Where these have been lost, they should be re-instated in keeping with the heritage quality of the building.

As a general principle, it is important that the Town Hall, and in particular the area to be used by the council, is preserved as far as possible in the layout it is in today. Any work, re-instatement, or replacement should be in keeping with the heritage quality of the building. We are happy to advise and discuss further.

We are also interested to know how this proposed development will affect the Public Offices and the extension behind it.

© Fylde Borough Council copyright [2006]

You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium. You must re-use it accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Fylde Borough Council copyright and you must give the title of the source document/publication. Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.fylde.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes FY8 1LW, or to listening@fylde.gov.uk.