

**29 June 2016**

**Ordinary Council**

**1-2 Seven Arches Road**

**Report of:** *Chris Leslie, Finance Director*

**Wards Affected:** *N/A*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Following the relocation of the registrars to the Town Hall, their previously occupied building of 1-2 Seven Arches Road is now vacant. Essex County Council has invited Brentwood Council to submit a bid for the purchase of this property.
- 1.2 Given the location of the property in relation to the Town Hall and how this might interact with the aspirations of the Town Hall hub, members are asked to approve a bid for the property.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer in consultation with Group Leaders or their Deputy to purchase 1-2 Seven Arches Road, Brentwood, CM14 4JG for up to the amount detailed in Appendix B (exempt).**
- 2.2 That a capital budget is approved for the purchase of 1-2 Seven Arches Road, Brentwood, CM14 4JG as set out in Appendix A.**
- 2.3 A full business case for the redevelopment of the property is prepared for consideration by the Policy Finance and Resources Committee.**

**3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The former registry office is within close proximity to the Town Hall site. Additionally, within the deeds the property owner has rights over four parking spaces within the Town Hall car park. The outline of the site is at Appendix A.

3.2 Once the former registry office became vacant the Council contacted Essex County Council regarding the possibility of purchasing the property. Due to its location there is potential that the property could be utilised to assist with the development of the Town Hall hub. There is also the added advantage of having control over a property with such a relationship to the Town Hall site.

3.3 Essex County Council have invited an unconditional bid from Brentwood Council for the property and extended their original deadline in recognition that member approval would be required.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

4.1 Part of the refurbishment work for the Town Hall hub will require temporary relocation of assets and possibly staff while work is carried out. There are also opportunities for the former registry office to be used to reduce relocation costs to the Council.

4.2 By owning the property the Council will also be able to control any development that took place on the site, managing the impact it has on the Town Hall.

4.3 There are also commercial opportunities for the site, which could be pursued. Details of the initial financial appraisal are set out in Appendix B.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

5.1 The purchase of the property would allow the Council to control the development of the site and provide an investment opportunity.

#### **6. Consultation**

6.1 None.

#### **7. References to Corporate Plan**

7.1 The vision of Transformation includes a commitment to review the Town Hall project to deliver a community hub, shared by others.

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title:** Ramesh Prashar, Financial Services Manager

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312513 / Ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk

8.1 There financial implications are attached as Appendix B of this report.

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title:** Daniel Toohey, Head of Legal Services

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8.2 Under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1072, the Council has powers to buy any land by agreement for the purposes of any of its functions or for the benefit, improvement or development of their area. It does not matter that the land is not immediately required for the intended purpose and it may be used for another purpose in the interim

## **9. Background Papers**

9.1 None

## **10. Appendices to this report**

Appendix A – Site Plan

Appendix B – Initial Financial Appraisal (Exempt)

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