

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 6 February 2014
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Enterprise
PORTFOLIO: Resources & Physical Environment
SUBJECT: Moor Lane Business Centre - Demolition
WARD(S) Kingsway

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update members on the closure and subsequent demolition of Moor Lane Business Centre

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board note

1) that the final date for closure of the building was 31st January 2014; and

2) that the demolition of the premises will commence in late February with completion being due in early June.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The decision was taken to close Moor Lane Business Centre in early 2013 as the investment needed to bring the building back into a reasonable state of repair was estimated to be well in excess of £750,000. Funding to undertake this work was not available and to fund it via rent increases would not be viable as rents would need to double for a least a period of 5 years before the monies were recouped.

3.2 Tenants were notified of the proposed closure in March 2013 and they were informed that they would have to vacate the premises by the final closure date which would be 31st January 2014.

3.3 Derek Twigg MP, Cllr Rob Polhill and David Parr met with the tenants on 27th March 2013 to discuss the proposals and to assure them that every assistance would be given to them in order to help them relocate in the Borough.

3.4 Property Services have been working closely with the tenants over the past few months the result being that of the 38 businesses located in the building, the majority have relocated into other premises within the Borough, only 5 having relocated elsewhere.

3.5 The site offers a regeneration opportunity, especially once all the adjoining sites become available. In order to have the site available for regeneration the building needs to be demolished however, and in respect of this we are progressing with the procurement of a contract for demolition purposes via 'The Chest' with a view to commencing the works on site in late February 2014 with completion anticipated in June 2014.

3.6 It is planned that the building will be demolished down to ground floor slab level, with the site being left safe and secure until such time that regeneration can take place.

3.7 Discussions have taken place with NHS Halton Clinical & Commissioning Group in respect of the site being used on an interim basis for a parking facility for clients using the NHS Health Centre building on Moor Lane where they are looking to enhance facilities. If funding is made available for these works it is the intention to allow this for a period of time prior to redevelopment in the future.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The proposals are in line with the Councils policy with regards regeneration, and ultimately will help lead to the regeneration of the immediate surrounding area.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The demolition works are being funded from capital monies set aside for a number of demolition projects, the estimated costs being in the region of £150,000

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The majority of tenants have been relocated into other premises mainly within the borough.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The proposals will help allow for the regeneration of the immediate surrounding area in the future

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Now that the building has closed and all tenants vacated the premises the risk of not demolishing the building is that vandal damage and ultimately possible arson attacks will leave the Council at risk of significant costs if a fire did occur due to the presence of asbestos in the building. Demolishing the building down to slab level as soon as possible will remove this risk and leave the site in a safe and secure state.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues associated with the demolition of the building.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

There are no papers within the meaning of the act.