

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 7th December 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Environment & Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Demolition of the former Waterloo Centre, Runcorn

WARD Mersey & Weston

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to notify members that the Chief Executive approved a waiver of standings orders under section 1.14.2 Emergency Powers to appoint a contractor to undertake the demolition of the former Waterloo Centre, Runcorn.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The former Waterloo Centre in Runcorn closed in 2004 and since then has been surplus to Council requirements. No viable alternative use has been found for the building over the years, and without investment, the building started to fall into disrepair.

3.2 The intention was to demolish the building in 2019, however concerns were raised by Planning as the building adjoins Edgerton Street Library, which is a listed building.

3.3 Over the past couple of years, the condition of the building has deteriorated and is now in a very poor state of repair. The latest report from the structural engineer states that it is not feasible to shore the building up given the level of deterioration and that the building needs to be demolished in a controlled manner before an uncontrolled demolition occurs.

3.4 As a result of the above, and following legal advice, the Operational Director for Policy, Planning & Transportation has made the decision that the building should be demolished as soon as possible.

3.5 A tender exercise was undertaken in 2019 via the Chest in respect of the demolition of the building. The lowest priced tender return was that of the contractor Excavation & Contracting in the amount of £89,000,

and they would have been appointed to undertake the work had the project not been put on hold due to the concerns raised.

3.6 Whilst the above priced tender no longer stands, to expedite matters and avoid a lengthy tender exercise we have been in negotiations with Excavation and Contracting and they submitted a revised price of £110,000. This revised price is lower than any of the other tenders returned from the 2019 tender exercise.

3.7 Whilst the building has been cordoned off and is of no danger to the public, it is vital that we proceed with the work without delay. In order to allow us to enter into a contract with Excavation and Contracting and avoid any unnecessary delay a waiver of the procurement standing orders via the Chief Executive under emergency powers was obtained.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications in respect of the above course of action.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An allocation has been made from the capital programme as such funding is available to carry out the work.

5.2 Demolition of the building will remove the need for any ongoing revenue expenditure associated with the building, thus reducing the financial liability.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**
None

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**
None

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**
None

6.4 **A Safer Halton**
None

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**
The demolition of the building will allow the site to be redeveloped for an alternative use.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The risk of not proceeding with these works is that an uncontrolled

collapse of the building may occur.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues associated with the above

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no climate change implications associated with the above decision

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

Officer decision notice- Demolition of Waterloo Building- Notification record of officer decisions- Democratic Services