



LEAD MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

DECISIONS to be made by the Lead Member for Resources,
Councillor David Elkin

TUESDAY, 25 JULY 2017 AT 2.00 PM

COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

AGENDA

- 1 Decisions made by the Lead Cabinet Member on 25 April 2017 (*Pages 3 - 4*)
- 2 Disclosure of Interests
Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Members regard the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct
- 3 Urgent items
Notification of any items which the Lead Member considers urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda.
- 4 12 Claremont, Hastings (*Pages 5 - 8*)
Report by the Chief Operating Officer
- 5 Any urgent items previously notified under agenda item 3

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent
LEWES BN7 1UE

17 July 2017

Contact Simon Bailey, Democratic Services Officer,
01273 481935
Email: simon.bailey@eastsussex.gov.uk

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LEAD MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Elkin, on 25 April 2017 at County Hall, Lewes

20 DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 13 DECEMBER 2016

20.1 RESOLVED to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2016.

21 REPORTS

21.1 Reports referred to in the minutes below are contained in the minute book.

22 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

22.1 RESOLVED to exclude the public and press from the remaining agenda items on the grounds that if the public and press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in Category 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).

23 WRITE-OFF OF DEBTS 2016/17

23.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer.

DECISIONS

23.2 RESOLVED (1) to authorise the writing off of 21 debts amounting to £226,402.90 in the Council's 2016/17 accounts;
(2) to note that provision is made for bad and doubtful debts; and
(3) to note the positive steps being put in place to make improvements going forward.

Reasons

23.3 There is no prospect of recovering the 21 outstanding debts. Some income becomes uncollectable and to allow for this the accounts of the council have always included a "provision for bad and doubtful debts" which recognises that a proportion of outstanding debts at year end may not be collected. This provision is monitored each month.

23.4 Work continues to review and streamline the debt recovery process, to learn the lessons and to ensure we have robust systems and processes in place within Accounts Receivable to recover debt promptly.

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Report to: **Lead Member for Resources**

Date: **25 July 2017**

By: **Chief Operating Officer**

Title of report: **12 Claremont, Hastings**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to declare this property surplus to County Council requirements, and delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to dispose of the property through a Community Asset Transfer process**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead Member for Resources is recommended to:

- 1) declare 12 Claremont, Hastings, surplus to the County Council's requirements;**
 - 2) authorise the marketing of the property under the County Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy; and**
 - 3) delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to dispose of the property through a Community Asset Transfer process.**
-

1 Background

1.1 12 Claremont was originally acquired by the County Council in 2012 for the specific purpose of extending its adjoining library building and incorporating a registrations service.

1.2 Since that time detailed plans were developed for an integrated service across the two buildings and these were evaluated on a value for money basis taking into account both the detailed costs and works to integrate the buildings and the service benefits that would be delivered.

1.3 Alternative options were considered for the registration service and a decision was taken to locate the service in Hastings Town Hall as this both provided a venue that had the appropriate civic status and presence, as well as providing a good quality provision and greater value for money.

1.4 A revised capital programme was approved for the Hastings Library at a significantly lower cost and the main library building is now nearing the completion of its refurbishment.

1.5 Since 2015 a number of options for the re-use of 12 Claremont have been considered, culminating in a soft market exercise with local stakeholders interested in using the building for the wider benefit of the community.

1.6 The property was constructed in 1850, is arranged over four floors (including basement) and adjoins the Grade II listed Hastings Library. Throughout the recent refurbishment of the library, 12 Claremont has been occupied by a building contractor for the provision of welfare facilities but had been stripped out previously and remains in a "shell" condition.

1.7 A straight disposal of the site would not exceed the original purchase price, which had included a premium to reflect the special purchaser status of the authority at that time. Estimated costs to return the building into a fully fitted office or commercial use are suggested in excess of £1 million with very limited potential for achieving significant return on investment.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The property is shown hatched black on the attached plan at Appendix A and comprises approx. 700 sq. metres across four floors (7,500 sq. ft.), occupying one hundred per cent of the site with no yard or car parking area.

2.2 Options for future uses have been considered including a disposal or leasing of the property on the open market, which in its existing condition is likely to generate low returns (capital or rental). Local agents advise that re-letting the property on a commercial basis would meet little demand, notwithstanding the level of investment required to refurbish it to a lettable condition.

2.3 In conjunction with SPACES (Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex) ESCC has undertaken soft market engagement with local community organisations that have cited interest in occupying the property. Feedback from this exercise has revealed strong interest in repurposing the property to benefit the wider community and complement the economic development of the immediate locality. Furthermore a number of potential funding streams have been identified as being accessible to community or social enterprise organisations for refurbishment works.

2.4 All County Council departments have been consulted and have confirmed that they have no requirement for the building or the site.

2.5 The Local Member has been informed and has raised no objections.

3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Council has no further operational use for the land and buildings.

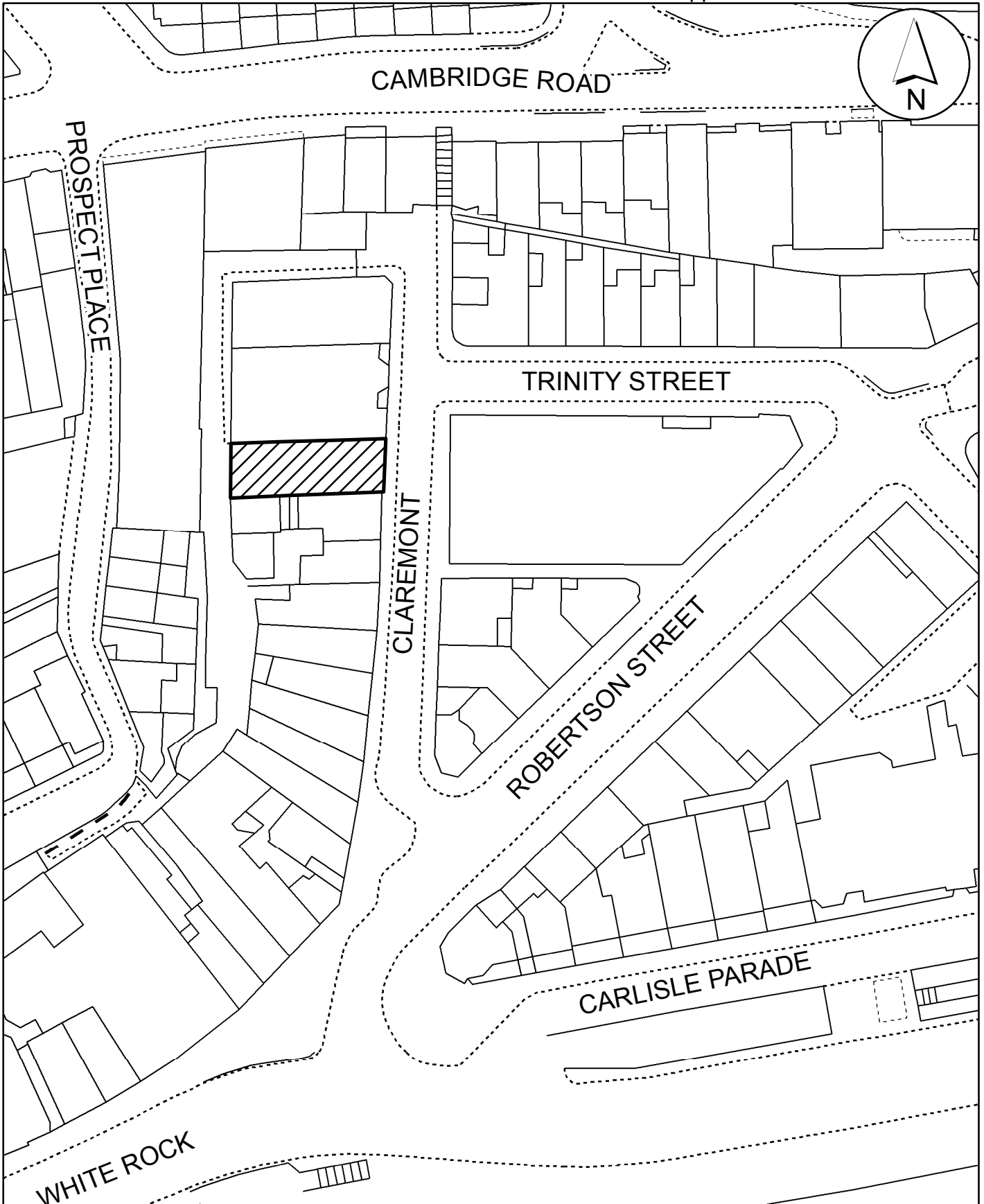
3.2 It is recommended that this property be declared surplus to County Council requirements and that negotiation for the transfer of a legal interest in the premises under the County Council's Community Asset Transfer policy (including a satisfactory business case being presented by the community organisation), be agreed and otherwise delegated to the Chief Operating Officer.

KEVIN FOSTER
Chief Operating Officer

Contact Officer: Nathan Whittington
Telephone: 01273 336842
Email: nathan.whittington@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Godfrey Daniel



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Appendix A - 12 Claremont, Hastings	Scale: 1:750	
Author: NJW	Date: 10/07/2017	

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