

# SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Meeting of Accommodation Strategy Working Party

**Date: Tuesday, 11th June, 2013**

**Place: Civic Centre, Civic Suite, Committee Room 6**

**Present:** Councillor Holdcroft (Chairman),  
Councillors Moring (Vice-Chairman), Ayling, Borton, Crystall, Hadley, \*Jarvis and Stafford.

\*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

**In Attendance:** S Holland, M Musgrave, J Boughtwood, R Harris  
also in attendance: T Oldman (Leesman - Agenda Items 4 and 5 only).

**Start/End Time:** 17.30/18.25

### \*\*\*\* Part I

#### **1 Apologies and substitutions.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carr (no substitute) and Lamb (substitute: Cllr Jarvis).

#### **2 Declarations of interest.**

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

#### **3 Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 24th October, 2012**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

### \*\*\*\* Part II

#### **4 Leesman Survey Presentation - Tim Oldman, Managing Director Leesman**

The Working Party received a brief overview from Mr Oldman, Managing Director Leesman, on the analysis of the results provided by Council staff in the two Leesman core workplace satisfaction e-surveys undertaken by the Council in 2011 and 2012. This item was considered in conjunction with Item 5 below.

#### **5 Leesman Survey**

The Working Party considered a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services which provided information about the two surveys carried out by Leesman to benchmark staff's opinions on their working environment at the Civic Centre pre and post refurbishment. The report was considered in conjunction with Item 4 above.

The Working Party was advised that two further surveys would be carried out by Leesman to benchmark performance. The first survey would take place in November 2013.

The Working Party sought clarification on a number of areas such as noise levels, leisure facilities and the need for some departmental areas to spread out large drawings and materials (e.g. planning and highways). The officers responded accordingly and advised that an action plan had been developed to manage the areas of improvement which would be presented to a future meeting of the Working Party.

Resolved:

1. That it be noted that the second survey showed a marked increase in staff satisfaction with the capability of the building to effectively support their various working activities and further noted that;

- This project had been delivered extremely well and had done better than some companies with substantially bigger investments to use for their projects;
- There had been considerable physical feature improvements in key areas including general décor, meeting rooms, and the variety of different types of workspace;
- Improvements in the workplace had positively impacted on the corporate image and workplace culture, along with substantial improvements in personal pride and a place staff feel proud to bring visitors to.

2. That in order to build on these improvements and in answer to staff feedback:

- There be a review of the use of some meeting rooms to see what can be changed to aid thinking and creativity;
- Video conferencing be introduced;
- Understand where there was a need for staff to spread out large drawings and materials to see if there was a need for a differently configured desk area for this use.

## **6 Civic Centre Efficiency Project Progress**

The Working Party considered a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services which provided details of how the Civic Centre Efficiency Project was progressing and sought approval to the floor layouts for Phase 2 and ground floor of Phase 3 and authority for the remaining contractual arrangements.

Members discussed the options for the ground floor registrar's access route and expressed a strong preference for option 1 as the preferred access route. However, Members did not rule out Option 2 and requested officers to provide estimated costs for both option 1 and 2. Officers highlighted that Option 1 would most likely be the most cost effective approach.

The Working Party noted that the layouts of the 1st and 2nd floors comprised in Phase 3 would be resolved at a later date and the Working Party would be consulted on the proposals. Members provided some initial views in respect to the Civic Suite, Council Chamber and the Committee Rooms, summarised below:

- Generally retain the current layout, etc of the Committee Rooms area but make improvements to the décor and lighting and undertake an analysis of their usage.
- The Members facilities (e.g. Members lounge on 2nd floor) should be improved and enhanced to create a more usable space for Members to meet with residents, etc and carry out their Councillor duties.
- Committee Room 10 should be reviewed and consideration given to how to optimise and make the best use of this space.

Resolved:

1. That the progress on the Civic Centre Efficiency Project be noted and the officers and contractors be congratulated for the smooth and efficient refurbishment of the Civic offices.

2. That Cabinet be recommended:

(a) to request officers to undertake an assessment of estimated costs for Option 1 and 2 for the new Registrars access route (Phase 2) and the findings be reported back to the Accommodation Strategy Working Party for consideration;

(b) to authorise the Corporate Director for Corporate Services in consultation with the Leader

and Executive Councillor for Corporate Services to determine the final layout of the ground floor (Phase 3), following consultation with the Accommodation Strategy Working Party.

3. That Cabinet be recommended to approve the tendering of professional services for Phase 3 of the Project through the iESE Regional Professional Services Framework Agreement and delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Corporate Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Corporate Services, to accept the most advantageous tender to the Council.

4. That Cabinet be recommended to approve the tendering of the construction works for Phase 2 and 3 of the Project through the Essex SMARTE EAST Framework Agreement and delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Corporate Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Corporate Services, to accept the most advantageous tenders to the Council.

5. That Cabinet be recommended to note the temporary decanting of the Contact Centre on the ground floor of the Civic Centre to either the Central Library or Margaret Thatcher House for the duration of the works to that area, and delegate the final decision on the temporary location to the Director for Corporate Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Corporate Services.