

## EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION FORM

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:** Cllr Pat Hackett

**KEY DECISION YES**

**PORTFOLIO AREA:** Regeneration & Growth – Alan Evans

**PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED:** All

**WARDS AFFECTED:** All

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**SUBJECT: TOWN CENTRE RETAIL WAREHOUSE, 107-127 CLAUGHTON ROAD  
BIRKENHEAD**

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### **1.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1.1 That the Leader of Council be recommended to:
- 1.2 Approve the Full Business Case for the acquisition of the land and rights of 'Town Centre Retail Warehouse - 107-127 Claughton Road Birkenhead' thereby agreeing in principle for the Council to purchase the long leasehold interest in this site.
- 1.3 Thereby authorise the Director of Economic and Housing Growth, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Investment to finalise the purchase of the leasehold interest in the Property on terms that are substantially in accordance with Council acquisitions guidelines.
- 1.4 Agree that, once the leasehold interest in the Property is acquired, the freehold interest in the Property can be incorporated into the LLP Option Agreement on appropriate terms subject to approval of the LLP and the outcomes of consultation on regeneration plans.
- 1.5 Agree that, once the long leasehold interest in the Property is acquired and the Property is vacated by the occupying tenant, the buildings currently on the Property subject to planning permission and surveys can be demolished subject to the outcome of consultation on the regeneration plans.

### **2.0 REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

- 2.1 The Property is situated at the heart of Birkenhead town centre and therefore forms a key site in respect of enabling any future redevelopment of the town centre to take place. The current owners of the long-term lease interest in the Property, Pochin Land & Development, went into administration in August 2019 and so the administrators are looking to release this asset to reduce Pochin's liability. The Council's intervention will enable the Council to obtain greater control of the town centre and ensure that future developments on this site have a positive impact in terms of placemaking and broader regeneration within the area. Current proposals for the site include the potential demolition of this unit



once it is vacated by the current occupying tenant and this will be informed by the outcome of the consultation on the regeneration plans.

- 2.2 The Council are the freehold owner of the Property and of others within its proximity. It is therefore appropriate to consider the potential marriage value of assets in this context – i.e. the ability to leverage greater value through critical mass and/or open up wider development opportunity and therefore value.
- 2.3 Of specific note in this regard is Milton Pavement, located immediately adjacent to the Property. Without control of the Property the development and investment potential at the Milton Pavement is more limited – fronted by retail service yards. This presents a development constraint and would impact on future use and value generation.
- 2.4 However, the prospective acquisition of the Property has a much wider context than its relationship with the Milton Pavement asset. The Property, both in isolation, and alongside other assets owned by the Council including surface level car parking and key assets on Europa Boulevard, could make a substantial contribution to the wider regeneration of Birkenhead town centre.

### 3.0 STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

- 3.1 The recommendations are made further to legal advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been completed. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

### 4.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

<p><b>Signed:</b> </p> <p><b>Executive Member: Cllr. Pat Hackett</b></p> <p><b>Date: 05.12.2019</b></p>	<p><b>Signed:</b> </p> <p><b>Chief Officer: Alan Evans</b></p> <p><b>Date: 11.12.2019</b></p>
<p><b>Date of Senior Policy Team Meeting(s):</b></p>	

**A list of background papers on this issue is held with:**

**Contact Officer:** Simon Rice

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Date of Publication:** 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Date of Expiry of Call-In Period:** 2 January 2020