



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

CABINET

6 December 2021

7.00 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Contact

Sandra Hancock Democratic Services Manager

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01923 278377

Publication date: 26 November 2021

Cabinet Membership

Mayor	P Taylor	(Chair)
Councillor	A Dychton	(Deputy Mayor)
Councillors	S Johnson, J Pattinson, I Stotesbury, M Watkin and T Williams	

Agenda

Part A – Open to the Public

1. Apologies for absence

2. Disclosure of interests (if any)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 1 November 2021 to be submitted and signed.

4. Conduct of meeting

The Cabinet may wish to consider whether there are any items on which there is general agreement which could be considered now, to enable discussion to focus on those items where the Cabinet sees a need for further debate.

5. Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant (Pages 4 - 14)

Report of the Executive Support Officer

6. Contract Exemption - Town Hall Refurbishment Lead Consultant and Project Management (Pages 15 - 19)

Report of the Group Head of Transformation

7. Procurement Exemption - Watford Market Management Contract - Six month extension until April 2023 (Pages 20 - 26)

Report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services

8. Ombudsman Decisions (Pages 27 - 47)

Report of the Group Head of Democracy and Governance

9. Town Hall Quarter programme: Town Hall and Colosseum Refurbishment Business Cases (Pages 48 - 411)

Report of the Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office

Appendix 2B is exempt, Schedule 12A, Paragraph 2 as it is possible that individuals can be identified.

Appendix 2C is exempt, Schedule 12A, Paragraph 3 as it contains commercially sensitive information.

10. Exclusion of press & public

The Chair to move: that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for part of the previous item and the following item of business where it has been identified it is likely, in view of the nature of the discussions, that if members of the public were present during it there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100(1) of the Act for the reasons stated under the items above and below in terms of Schedule 12A.

Note: if approved, the Chair will ask members of the press and public to leave the meeting at this point.

11. Watford Business Park - Delegated Authority to appoint a Principle Contractor (Pages 412 - 443)

Report of the Property Development Project Manager

The documents are exempt in accordance with Paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A as they contain commercially sensitive information.

Agenda Item 5

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday, 6 December 2021

Report author: Executive Support Officer

Title: Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant

1.0 Summary

1.1 Watford Borough Council is a signatory to the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant launched in 2011. The Covenant has been refreshed to ensure that it is in line with the current language of the Armed Forces Covenant and will be reaffirmed at a ceremony on 16 December 2021. A copy of the refreshed Covenant is attached to this report.

1.2 As Watford looks towards celebrating 100 years since its grant of charter in 1922, there is an opportunity to renew focus on the town's veterans. It is suggested that proposals should be brought to Cabinet drawing on the aspirations of the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant and best practice from other authorities.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Cabinet members are unaware of changes to the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant	Cabinet members' knowledge of the Covenant would be out of date	Circulate the refreshed Covenant to Cabinet	Treat	2
Watford's veterans are not included in plans to mark the town's charter centenary	The contribution of veterans to the life of the town would be overlooked	Ensure that the responsible Portfolio Holder and the council's representative on the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board are involved in plans to mark the town's centenary	Treat	2

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet:

1. notes the changes to the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant
2. agrees to use Watford's centenary celebrations in 2022 as an opportunity to focus on the support offered to local veterans.

Further information:

Ishbel Morren

ishbel.morren@watford.gov.uk

4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation to ensure that those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. The covenant focusses on helping members of the armed forces community have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen.
- 4.2 Local authorities and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to work together to establish a Covenant. Hertfordshire's Covenant was launched in 2011 and Watford Borough Council, along with the county's other district and borough councils, is a signatory. Although Hertfordshire is not a garrisoned county, it is home to:
- UK's Permanent Joint Headquarters in Northwood
 - 162 Medical Squadron, 254 Medical Regiment RAMC, based at the Army Reserve Centre, Hitchin
 - 6 Platoon, 3 (Essex & Hertfordshire) Company, 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment based at the Army Reserve Centre Hertford.
- 4.3 The Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant aims to ensure that veterans and those in the armed forces are not disadvantaged in accessing services and that their sacrifices are recognised and remembered. The Covenant also seeks to encourage the integration of service life into civilian life.
- 4.4 The Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board, promoted locally as Hertfordshire Heroes, is responsible for delivering the aims of the Covenant and meets twice a year. Watford Borough Council is represented by Councillor Bill Stanton. The Board is chaired by County Councillor Terry Douris, Executive Member for Education, Libraries and Lifelong Learning, and is administered by Hertfordshire County Council.

- 4.5 At the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board meeting on 30 September 2021, Hertfordshire's refreshed Covenant was considered and is attached to this report. The document has been updated to ensure that it is in line with the current language of the Armed Forces Covenant. During discussions some additional wording was agreed by the Board. A reaffirmation ceremony for the Covenant will be held on 16 December 2021.
- 4.6 Under the Covenant, and in line with government legislation, Watford Borough Council gives 'additional preference' on its Housing Register to those who have served in the armed forces. This means that current and former armed forces personnel get more preference than other applicants with 'reasonable preference' i.e., the homeless, those in insanitary or overcrowded conditions, those who need to be housed in Watford due to social or medical welfare reasons and would be caused considerable hardship if this did not happen. Over the past three years, three applicants from the Armed Forces have been housed by the council. A further three applicants are currently on the authority's Housing Register.
- 4.7 The council also seeks to celebrate and honour the armed forces community by observing Armed Forces Day, which takes place on the last Saturday in June each year, with the Mayor and Chairman raising the Armed Forces Flag outside the Town Hall.
- 4.8 As Watford looks towards celebrating 100 years since its grant of charter, there is an opportunity to renew focus on the town's veterans. In addition to considering what further practical help and support might be afforded to former service personnel, any events should include recognition of the significant contribution of Watford's veterans to the life of the town. It is suggested that further proposals should be brought to Cabinet to meet this objective drawing on the aspirations of the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant and best practice from other authorities.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that any changes to policies with budget implications will be considered as part of the overall Budget.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered that any events celebrating Watford's grant of charter should take equalities obligations into account.

5.3.2 Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

5.4 Staffing

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications as a result of this report.

5.5 Accommodation

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications as a result of this report.

5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

5.6.1 There are no community safety or crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.

5.7 Sustainability

5.7.1 There are no sustainability implications as a result of this report.

Appendices

- Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant

Background papers

Watford Borough Council Nominations Policy



**HERTFORDSHIRE
HEROES**



**ARMED FORCES
COVENANT**

**HERTFORDSHIRE ARMED FORCES COVENANT
between**

**Representatives of Local Government, the Public Sector, the Charitable and
Voluntary Sectors,
Businesses, the Civilian Community of Hertfordshire**

and

The Armed Forces Community in Hertfordshire

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CONTACT: Hertfordshire.Heroes@hertfordshire.gov.uk	

SECTION 1: PARTICIPANTS

1.1 This Armed Forces Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces and their families working and residing in Hertfordshire

And

Representatives of Local Government, the Public Sector, the Charitable and Voluntary Sectors, Businesses, and the Civilian Community of Hertfordshire

1.2 The original Covenant was formally launched on 8 July 2012 and reaffirmed 16 December 2021.

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES OF THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

2.1 The Armed Forces Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. This Covenant encompasses the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.

2.2 The Armed Forces Covenant is based upon two key principles:

- The Armed Forces community should not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services.
- Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

2.3 The purpose of this Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Hertfordshire and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel their families and widow(er)s in Hertfordshire.

2.4 For Hertfordshire County Council and partner organisations, the Covenant presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community.

2.5 For the Armed Forces community, the Covenant encourages the integration of Service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

SECTION 3: OBJECTIVES AND GENERAL INTENTIONS

Aims of the Covenant

- 3.1 The Armed Forces Covenant defines the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government, and the Armed Forces Community.
- 3.2 It aims to encourage all parties within a community to offer support to the local Armed Forces Community and make it easier for Service personnel, families, and veterans to access the help and support available from the Ministry of Defence, from statutory providers and from the Charitable and Voluntary Sector. These organisations already work together in partnership at local level.
- 3.3 The Covenant is intended to be a two-way arrangement and the Armed Forces Community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the Service community into civilian life.

SECTION 4: HERTFORDSHIRE MEASURES

The Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant

4.1 Our Principle

It is vital to recognise and celebrate Her Majesty's Armed Forces and all that they do for us. The sacrifice and commitment made by our Armed Forces Community means that we, as a county, should ensure that no serving or retired member of Her Majesty's Armed Forces and veterans, nor their families should be disadvantaged in accessing services as a result of serving their country and should receive fair and proper treatment in recognition of what they have done. Furthermore, special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

4.2 Developing the Covenant

The development of Hertfordshire's Community Covenant was a countywide project and a reflection of the support of the principle behind it. On 13 December 2011 over twenty-five organisations from the public, private and charitable sectors came together to sign a pledge to develop the Community Covenant and worked together to identify ways to increase awareness of the contribution made by the Armed Forces and to deliver tangible results.

The Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board was established in 2012 and works in partnership to:

- Ensure that veterans and those in the Armed Forces are not disadvantaged in accessing services; recognising that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those such as the injured and bereaved.

- Ensure that the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces Community are recognised and remembered
- Encourage the integration of service life into civilian life.

4.3 **Fair access to services**

Often, due to the transient nature of the work that the Armed Forces do, military personnel can sometimes face hurdles when trying to integrate into everyday community life. In these areas, the Armed Forces want to be treated fairly and properly. In order to ensure that access to services is promoted:

- We will work towards ensuring that all serving or retired Armed Forces personnel have appropriate access to social housing.
- We will work towards ensuring that children from Armed Forces families are not disadvantaged when applying for school places, specifically if moving to Hertfordshire midway through an academic year.
- We will work with the NHS, GP's and others involved in healthcare, to raise awareness of specific issues facing Armed Forces personnel, their families and veterans, and the support available
- We will work to ensure a seamless transition to NHS care, promoting the specific concerns and needs of Armed Forces Personnel

4.4 **Celebrating and honouring the Armed Forces Community**

There are very few people in Hertfordshire who so readily risk their lives to protect the country and its' residents. It is this commitment that deserves to be recognised within this Covenant and therefore, in order to celebrate and honour the Armed Forces Community:

- We will work to raise the public profile of Hertfordshire's Armed Forces, including informing the community about what it is that the Armed Forces do.
- We will develop ways to facilitate and ease the transition of those leaving the military, into the civilian community in Hertfordshire.
- We will work to improve provision of information and access to public services
- We will encourage local businesses to offer discounts for Armed Forces Personnel as a way of recognising what they have done for all of us.

4.5 **Encourage the integration of service life into civilian life**

Thankfully, the vast majority of Armed Forces Personnel have no additional needs or requirement of state services than any other resident. However, sometimes, due to the work that they do or have done, serving or retired Armed Forces personnel need a bit of extra support. In recognition of the work they have done for all of us, in order to help them when the need arises:

- We will maintain the Hertfordshire Heroes brand and [website](#), signposting to [Herts Help](#) and other services where serving or retired personnel can find out about the financial and welfare help available to them.

- We will ensure that the advice and support is available to help Military Personnel who are re-locating to Hertfordshire, to support them in their transition from military to civilian life.
- We will seek to promote access to suitable employment and training opportunities for those leaving active service, maximising and building on their skills gained in military service.

4.6 **The Armed Forces in Hertfordshire**

The Hertfordshire Covenant is intended to be a two-way arrangement between the Armed Forces Community and the civilian community of Hertfordshire. The Armed Forces Community will work with the community of Hertfordshire to:

- promote an understanding and awareness amongst the public of the Armed Forces Community, their unique role and issues affecting the Armed Forces Community.
- develop strong relationships with the local communities of Hertfordshire.
- support activities which help integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life, which will aid the civilian community to develop a better understanding of the Armed Forces.

This will be through involvement in community regeneration projects, educational activities, sporting events and other forms of engagement within the Hertfordshire community as well as participation in events such as the Hertfordshire County Show, Freedom Parades, Armed Forces Day celebrations and Remembrance Services.

Hertfordshire is not a garrisoned county but is home to the following military units:

- Northwood Headquarters
- 162 Medical Squadron
- Royal Anglian Regiment – 6 Platoon as part of 3 Company

These are supported by cadet organisations from all three Services, and organisations such as the Royal British Legion, SSAFA the Armed Forces Charity, the Royal Naval Association, the Army Benevolent Fund and the Royal Air Force Association, all of which represent the interests of Military veterans within Hertfordshire.

4.7 **How we will keep this Covenant alive**

The **Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board** will meet on a six-monthly basis working in partnership to:

- Ensure that veterans and those in the Armed Forces are not disadvantaged in accessing services; recognising that special

consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those such as the injured and bereaved.

- Ensure that the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces Community are recognised and remembered
- Encourage the integration of service life into civilian life.
- Prepare and publish an Annual Report on the work and achievements of the Board.

SECTION 5: PLEDGE SIGNING

- 5.1 Representatives from organisations across the county were invited to reaffirm their pledge to the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant on 16 December 2021. Councillor Terry Douris, Executive Member, Education, Libraries & Lifelong Learning and Chairman of the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board invited organisations to pledge to continue the work of the multi-agency partnership to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and living in Hertfordshire and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most.
- 5.2 Previously, on 13 December 2011, the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, senior representatives of Her Majesty's Armed Forces, the Royal British Legion, Hertfordshire County Council, all ten of Hertfordshire's district and borough councils, NHS Hertfordshire, the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Job Centre Plus as well as other key representatives from the private, public, voluntary and charitable sectors assembled at County Hall in Hertford to sign a pledge to develop the Hertfordshire Community Covenant. The aim of the signing ceremony was to kick start the process of establishing the Covenant between the Armed Forces and the Hertfordshire community. Councillor Chris Hayward, Cabinet Member for Localism and Chairman of the multi-agency executive steering group charged with the developing the community covenant took the opportunity at the ceremony to comment that "This is an important way we can show our commitment to ensuring that those in the Armed Forces are not disadvantaged as a result of the vital work that they do for us."

CONTACT: Hertfordshire.Heroes@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday, 6 December 2021

Report author: Group Head of Transformation

Title: Contract Exemption - Town Hall Refurbishment Lead Consultant and Project Management

1.0 Summary

1.1 Under the council’s Contract Procedure Rules an exemptions agreed with a value over £100,000 need to be reported to Cabinet for noting.

1.2 Attached as appendix 1 is an exemption agreed by the Group Head of Transformation and Managing Director for the award of the contract for the Town Hall Refurbishment Lead Consultant and Project Management.

1.3 Cabinet is asked to note the exemption.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Potential alternative suppliers challenge the council’s decision to award this contract.	Limited due to the Award being PPR compliant.	Award is compliant with Public Procurement Regulations using the Direct Award provision within the SCF framework; therefore there are no grounds for a challenge.	Tolerate	1

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That the Exemption be noted.

Further information:

Andrew Cox

andrew.cox@watford.gov.uk

01923 278124

4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 The detail of the exemption and the reason for it can be found in the appendix 1 of this report.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the cost of this contract is included within the agreed budget for the Town Hall Quarter programme.

5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the framework that this contract is let under allows for a direct award. The framework has already complied with the Public Procurement Regulations.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

5.3.1 There are no implications.

5.4 Staffing

5.4.1 There are no implications.

5.5 Accommodation

5.5.1 There are no implications.

5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

5.6.1 There are no implications.

5.7 Sustainability

5.7.1 There are no implications.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Town Hall Refurbishment Lead Consultant and Project Management Exemption Report

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules - request form - Request Approved

ECPR373008185

Your details

First name	Andrew
Last name	Cox
Email address	Andrew.Cox@watford.gov.uk
Job title	Group Head of Transformation
Section / Department	Transformation

Exemption request details

Exemption category	Exceptional Circumstances
Details / Circumstances / Explanation of why an exemption was required	The council procured a contract with Mace via an OJEU Open Tender in early 2020 to support the refurbishment of the Colosseum building. At this point this was a standalone project. In the autumn of 2020 as plans for the Town Hall Quarter were developed it became clear that there were significant synergies and opportunities for the council to progress the Town Hall refurbishment in parallel with the Colosseum refurbishment and these proposals were agreed by Cabinet in January 2021. The clear synergy between the two projects and benefits of delivering them together mean that it will be beneficial from a financial, delivery and design perspective to have one design team for the projects and given the performance of Mace and their team through to RIBA Stage 2 designs on the Colosseum it is recommended that they also take on the same responsibilities for the Town Hall project. The original contract with Mace cannot be extended / varied to cover these additional responsibilities and therefore this exemption is required to enable a Direct Award of this contract to Mace under the SCF framework, which has provision which allow Direct Award. The council can be assured of the value for money as the rates and pricing provided by Mace for this project are in line with those competitively tendered for the original Colosseum contract.
Contract Title	Town Hall Refurbishment - Lead Consultant and Project Management
Vendor / Contractor	Mace
Date Contract let	25 October 2021
Term / Duration of Contract	Until completion of works - approx. end 2024
End date	31 December 2024
Total Value of Contract	£650,000
WBC Contract Manager name	Peter Vickerstaff
WBC Contract Manager email	peter.vickerstaff@watford.gov.uk
Date	23 October 2021

Group Head of Service approval

Group Head of Service approving / rejecting:	Andrew Cox
Decision	Approve and forward to the Managing Director
Date	22 October 2021

Managing Director decision

Decision	Approve the request
Managing Director	Donna Nolan
Date	22 October 2021

Portfolio holder

Name of the Portfolio Holder informed	Councillor Mark Watkin
Date the Portfolio Holder was informed	23 October 2021
Date reported to Cabinet (If over Â£100K)	06 December 2021

Agenda Item 7

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday, 6 December 2021

Report author: Head of Leisure and Environmental Services

Title: Procurement Exemption - Watford Market Management Contract – Six month extension until April 2023

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 In September 2019 Watford Borough Council (WBC) appointed MAM to manage Watford Market for a three year period, this term expires on 1 October 2022. Therefore, WBC needs to commence pre-procurement planning and initiate the tender process to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced contractor to manage the market service from this date.
- 1.2 In the time since the last Watford Market Management Contract (WMMC) was procured (circa 2014) a number of strategic and operational changes have occurred in the market industry. This coincides with parallel changes to the council's role and long term vision for the borough's wider regeneration ambitions and vision for the high street and town centre. These changes will impact on any review of the new contract and service specification to ensure that the relationship between WBC and the successful contractor helps to deliver the council's vision and priorities.
- 1.3 The future of the Market and strategic direction has yet to be fully debated by Leadership Board and Cllrs, traders and residents and there is a range of issues / improvements that would benefit from this discussion e.g. extended the opening days on a Sunday and Monday, opening in the evening for delivery services.
- 1.4 An options appraisal for the future operating and delivery of the market service has been conducted and a six month contract extension contract has been agreed by Portfolio Holders in October 2021. This extension will allow the council to gain valuable insight into the current local authority market sector, meet with potential management contractors and engage with a range of internal and external stakeholders to agree the future strategic direction of market offer/service.
- 1.5 The importance of the market is an area of focus within the Council's Economic strategy and associated action plan, within which it commits us to seek to diversify the trader mix, establish opportunities for pop-ups and consideration of establishing specialised markets. In turn the importance of markets will be stressed in the Town Centre Strategy – as an attraction in itself and to diversify and strengthen the retail offer in the town. The work on the framework and the planned engagement with

residents and stakeholders will be an opportunity to understand their views on the market and help craft our planned procurement.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Challenge to the council decision to award the contract without complying with the Public Procurement Regulations	Delay in awarding the contract	<p>WBC to follow the relevant procurement advice and guidance as details in the regulations</p> <p>External independent support to assess and evaluate the tender submissions</p>	Treat	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6
Lack of capacity or resources to deliver retender process	Unable to deliver the project to the agreed milestones and timeline	<p>External specialist consultancy advice to support the retender</p> <p>Additional resources required to fund the external consultancy</p> <p>Officer working group has been established to support the retender process</p>	Treat	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6

<p>Tender does not attract interest from market place in a post Covid market environment and timing will be key for this procurement</p>	<p>Council unable to appoint a suitable qualified and experienced contractor to operate the market</p>	<p>Risks to be minimised through the chosen procurement route and affordability threshold</p> <p>Results of engagement will help to inform the development of the new service specification and WBC's expectations for the new management contract, in particular the potential for risk share in the early years of the contract</p>	<p>Treat</p>	<p>Unlikely (3) x High (3) = rating of 9</p>
<p>Lack of data and financial information for contractor to inform the retender process</p>	<p>Bidders are unable to provide a detailed tender submission</p>	<p>Council to use the previous management data provided to ensure that all bidders have access to some financial and usage data for the market</p> <p>Council to allow bidders to form a financial base position that takes into account the impact of Covid on the market sector and allows the potential for risk</p>	<p>Treat</p>	<p>Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6</p>

		share in the early years		
Contractors do not deliver contract and service specification and specialist events programme e.g. market lates	The market service is not available for residents and customers to use	Regular contract monitoring by the council to review the contract and KPI's requirements are being met by the contractor alongside and scrutiny by elected members	Treat	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6
The new management contractor goes into administration	As above	As above Regular review of contractors accounts	Tolerate	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6
Contractor is taken over by another company during the contract term	Could have no impact on the service Or New company tries to alter the management fee, contract and KPI's which impacts on the service	As above Option to terminate the contract early	Tolerate	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet notes the Approved Exemption to the Council's Procurement Procedures in relation to the document in Appendix 1.

Further information:

Chris Fennell – Head of Leisure and Environmental Services

Chris.fennell@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by:

Alan Gough, Group Head of Community and Environmental Services

4.0 **Detailed proposal**

4.1 Details of the exemption can be found in Appendix 1.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the additional market costs will be met from existing resources. The income from the market traders will be used to pay the additional six month management fee to the contractor.

5.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that Cabinet must be informed of exemptions to the contract procedure rules if the value exceeds £100,000 which this contract does.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken for the new WMMC in 2021/22 to establish whether there are any emerging needs that are not addressed through the contract. If there are emerging needs identified during the period of the contract that are not currently met, consideration will be given as to whether these are a District Council responsibility, align with the council's corporate objectives and whether council funding or grant aid is required in order to commission the service.

5.3.2 The proposal is not expected to have any detrimental effect on human rights issues.

5.3.3 Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 No staffing issues relate to this report.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no changes identified in this report relating to WBC office/town hall accommodation.

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 No community safety/crime and disorders relate to this report.

5.7 Sustainability

5.7.1 These proposal form part of the councils wider sustainable programme/strategy. The WMMC objectives are to reduce its carbon footprint and increase its recycling of waste from the market.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Approved Procurement Exemption

Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules - request form - Request Approved

ECPR373751374

Your details

First name	Chris
Last name	Fennell
Email address	chris.fennell@watford.gov.uk
Job title	Head of Leisure and Environmental Services
Section / Department	Leisure and Environmental Services

Exemption request details

Exemption category	Limited market
Details / Circumstances / Explanation of why an exemption was required	In September 2019 Watford Borough Council (WBC) appointed MAM to manage Watford Market for a three year period, this term expires on 1 October 2022. The council has sort a six month extension of the current contract will allow the council time review the future of the market as the strategic direction for the service has yet to be fully debated by Leadership Board and Cllrs, traders and residents and there is a range of issues / improvements that would benefit from this discussion e.g. extended the opening days on a Sunday and Monday, opening in the evening for delivery services and street food only being available from inside units.
Contract Title	Watford Market
Vendor / Contractor	Market Asset Management (MAM)
Date Contract let	22 November 2021
Term / Duration of Contract	6 months (26 weeks) from 1 October 2022
End date	31 March 2023
Total Value of Contract	Option 2 (active management of the traders and new gazebo and support costs) " £3,965 per week " 26 weeks = " £103,090
WBC Contract Manager name	Chris Fennell
WBC Contract Manager email	chris.fennell@watford.gov.uk
Comments / Other Information	The cost of the additional six month management fee to MAM will be funded from the income generated from the market traders rental income.
Date	27 October 2021

Group Head of Service approval

Group Head of Service approving / rejecting:	Alan Gough
Decision	Approve and forward to the Managing Director
Date	27 October 2021

Managing Director decision

Decision	Approve the request
Comments (optional)	The extension of the existing contract is approved on the basis of the demonstrable benefit
Managing Director	Donna Nolan
Date	27 October 2021

Portfolio holder

Name of the Portfolio Holder informed	Tim Williams
Date the Portfolio Holder was informed	18 October 2021

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday, 6 December 2021

Report author: Group Head of Democracy and Governance

Title: Ombudsman Decisions

1.0 Summary

1.1 Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the council's Monitoring Officer is legally obliged to make a report to cabinet of any finding of fault by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

1.2 On 29 October 2021 and 15 November 2021 the council received final decisions from the Ombudsman in 2 matters, one relating to Housing and the other Revenues and Benefits. The anonymised decisions are attached as appendices 1 and 2.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
That the lessons learned are not followed	Similar findings of fault in the future leading to a loss of reputation	That the findings be actioned	Treat	2

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That the decisions be noted.

Further information:

Carol Chen

carol.chen@watford.gov.uk

Tel: 01923 278350

4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 Under s5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the council's Monitoring Officer is legally obliged to report to Cabinet any findings of fault by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
- 4.2 On 29 October 2021 the council received the Ombudsman's final decision in relation to a complaint about Housing. The complainant complained about the council's refusal to award him higher priority on medical grounds under the council's Nominations Policy. The Ombudsman decided to partially uphold his complaint that in the final review decision the council failed to give clear reasons in accordance with the policy as to why the complainant was not awarded a higher banding. The Ombudsman also found fault in the delay in considering the complainant's request for a first review from February 2020 to the decision in October 2020.
- 4.3 The council has accepted the Ombudsman's findings and has apologised to the complainant for the delay and arranged for the payment of £200 to the complainant for the uncertainty, time and trouble he had to go to, to chase a reply to his review request. The council has also agreed to undertake another review of the decision on medical and social and welfare grounds. In addition it has amended its guidance to Now Medical the council's independent medical advisors on the criteria they need to consider when advising on banding reviews under the Nominations Policy. To avoid further delays in decision making all requests for review are diarised in each Caseworker, Senior Housing Solutions Officers and Housing Solutions Manager's diary, alerts set up at four weeks to enable better monitoring and they are discussed at the Caseworker morning meetings. The final decision is attached as appendix 1.
- 4.4 On 15 November 2021 the council received the Ombudsman's final decision in relation to a complaint about Revenues and Benefits. The complainant complained that the council was wrong to refuse him a discretionary grant and handled his complaints poorly causing him financial hardship and distress. The Ombudsman found no fault in the decision not to award the grant but found fault in the way it handled his subsequent complaint which caused him injustice.
- 4.5 The council has accepted the Ombudsman's findings and has apologised to the complainant for failing to reply to his emails or progressing his calls. The Revenues and Benefits service has also arranged for the payment of £200 to be made to the complainant to recognise the uncertainty caused him and the time and trouble he had to go through to get his complaint dealt with. The service was extremely busy during the time of the complaint dealing with applications for these discretionary grants. However it accepts it could have managed customers' expectations better by explaining that it was busy and that there was likely to be a delay in responding. It also accepts it ought to have had an escalation route and provided officer names and contact details. Having also deactivated the email address for the scheme after the scheme has closed it could have provided an alternative email address that

customers could have contacted if they still had queries about the scheme. The service now also checks a random sample of work to ensure it has been thorough when making decisions as a result of the lessons learned from this complaint. The final decision is attached at appendix 2.

4.6 All decisions are published on the Ombudsman's website in anonymised form.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the compensation will be met from the services existing budgets.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that all findings of fault are required to be reported to cabinet.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered that there are no direct equalities impacts arising from this report.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 No implications.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 No Implications

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 No implications

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 No implications

Appendices

Appendix 1 Final Decision Housing

Appendix 2 Final Decision Revenues and Benefits

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

The Ombudsman's final decision

Summary: Mr Y complains about the Council's refusal to award him higher priority on medical grounds under its housing allocations policy. The Ombudsman has decided to uphold Mr Y's complaint that the Council failed to give clear reasons, in line with its Housing Nominations Policy, as to why he was not awarded higher priority on medical grounds. We find that this caused Mr Y uncertainty. To remedy this injustice, the Council has agreed to apologise to Mr Y, make him a payment, carry out a banding review in a way that is in line with its policy and make a service improvement.

The complaint

1. The complainant, who I shall refer to here as Mr Y, complains about the Council's refusal to award him higher priority on medical grounds under its housing allocations policy. He says, when reviewing his banding, the Council:
 - a) incorrectly told him he could not register his newborn child as a dependent in his household;
 - b) incorrectly stated his condition was not caused by his current accommodation and failed to give clear reasons why he was not awarded higher priority on medical grounds;
 - c) failed to consider his need for private outdoor space to help with his mental health conditions. He says the Council's consideration of his conditions showed a bias against mental health conditions; and,
 - d) failed to consider the impact noise from communal outdoor areas was having on his conditions and ability to leave his home.
2. Mr Y says he currently feels trapped in his home because he is surrounded by communal outdoor spaces. He says this affects his mental health conditions, including social anxiety, as he struggles to go out into public spaces. Mr Y says this means he often keeps his curtains closed and it makes accessing mental health services more difficult.

The Ombudsman's role and powers

3. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this statement, I have used the word fault to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. I refer to this as 'injustice'. If there has been fault which has caused an

injustice, we may suggest a remedy. (*Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1), as amended*)

4. We cannot question whether a council's decision is right or wrong simply because the complainant disagrees with it. We must consider whether there was fault in the way the decision was reached. (*Local Government Act 1974, section 34(3), as amended*)
5. If we are satisfied with a council's actions or proposed actions, we can complete our investigation and issue a decision statement. (*Local Government Act 1974, section 30(1B) and 34H(i), as amended*)

How I considered this complaint

6. I considered the information and documents provided by Mr Y and the Council. I spoke to Mr Y about his complaint.
7. Mr Y and the Council both had an opportunity to comment on my draft decision. I considered their comments before making a final decision.

What I found

Housing allocations

8. Every local housing authority must publish an allocations scheme that sets out how it prioritises applicants, and its procedures for allocating housing. All allocations must be made in strict accordance with the published scheme. (*Housing Act 1996, section 166A(1) & (14)*)
9. An allocations scheme must give reasonable preference to applicants in some categories, including people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds and people who need to move to avoid hardship to themselves or others. (*Housing Act 1996, section 166A(3)*)
10. The Council's Housing Nominations policy (2015) sets out eligibility for applicants to its bidding register for a new property. It has five different eligibility categories known as bands. Applicants in Band A will have the highest priority, with applicants in Band E the lowest priority.
11. Applicants may be awarded Band A to Band D priority on medical grounds by the Council. The level of banding awarded will depend on how severely the applicant's condition is affected by their current housing situation. For example, someone's medical condition who is severely affected by their current housing situation may be awarded Band A by the Council (where there is an urgent housing need). Where the Council decides the applicant's current accommodation is not appropriate for their medical needs and there is a high medical need to move, the Council may award Band C (where there is a high housing need).
12. Its policy states, where an applicant or a member of their household has a medical condition or disability that is affected by their housing circumstances, they will be asked to complete a medical self-assessment form. This may be referred to the Council's Independent Medical Adviser if the Council Housing Officer needs more advice or guidance before making a decision about whether priority on medical grounds should be awarded.
13. When assessing bedroom entitlement, the Council's policy states that a single person will be entitled to bid on one-bedroom properties, whereas parent(s) with one child will be entitled to bid on two-bedroom properties.

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14. The Council's allocation policy states if dependent children join the applicant's household, the applicant will need to prove that:
- They are the dependent's principal guardian; and
 - their home is the dependant's main home and will be for the foreseeable future.

What happened

15. In January 2020, Mr Y applied to the Council to have his banding reviewed. He had been awarded Band E under the Council's Housing Nominations policy. This was awarded to applicants, like Mr Y, who were tenants "of registered providers seeking alternative accommodation but [the Council considered] otherwise adequately housed ... [and] living in the [Council authority area]". Mr Y was housed in a two-bedroom, ground floor flat. He applied on medical grounds for a banding review because he said:
- his existing mental health issues were being negatively affected by his current housing. He asked to be considered for priority on medical grounds with a need for a two-bedroom property, private access and outdoor space. Mr Y provided a number of letters from medical professionals in support of his review request; and
 - the Council's housing officer had incorrectly told him he was not eligible for priority on medical grounds. He said the housing officer told him the reason for this was because his mental health conditions would continue even if he was offered alternative accommodation.
16. In February, the Council wrote to Mr Y with the outcome of its banding review. It refused to change Mr Y's banding. It explained that it considered Mr Y was adequately housed in social housing and the number of bedrooms in his property suitably met his needs. It said Mr Y's housing need was to be housed in a one-bedroom, ground floor flat. As Mr Y was housed in social housing, it said he could bid for accommodation conducive to his lifestyle under its Choice Based Lettings system.
17. Some days later, Mr Y requested a review of the Council's banding decision and asked the Council to prioritise him as in urgent need of a two-bedroom property. He said:
- the Council had incorrectly said he lived in a one-bedroom property. Rather, he lived in a two-bedroom property where the second bedroom was used when his son stayed or he needed support with his mental health conditions from a friend or his partner;
 - he disagreed with the Council housing officer's decision. He said the evidence from his GP supported the position that a move to a property with private outdoor space would help Mr Y's mental health conditions. He said such a move would help as he would no longer feel trapped in his home by the communal outdoor spaces. With access to a private outdoor space, he would be able to leave his property more easily and keep his curtains open; and,
 - his partner was expecting a child who they planned to register as living with Mr Y later in the year.
18. In October, the Council wrote to Mr Y with the outcome of the review of its decision. It upheld its decision and decided Mr Y would remain in Band E. The Council said:

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- it agreed that Mr Y was currently housed in a two-bedroom, not one-bedroom, property. However, it said there was insufficient evidence to show Mr Y required the second bedroom to meet any care needs;
 - for Mr Y's newborn child to be considered part of his household, he would need to complete a change of circumstances form and provide evidence he is in receipt of Child Benefit for her; and,
 - it did not consider the noise from communal spaces, including from children playing outside near his window, to be anti-social behaviour directed at Mr Y. Rather, it said these were everyday, ordinary noises of people passing through communal space.
19. The Council provided Mr Y with information on other options available to him, including receiving Band B priority if he wished to downsize to a one-bedroom property. This was because Mr Y was deemed to be under occupying his two-bedroom property at this time.
 20. Mr Y requested a second review of the Council's decision.
 21. Mr Y complained a Council officer, during a phone call had incorrectly told him he could not register his newborn child as a dependant as his child lived elsewhere. He complained the Council had not properly considered the impact of the noise coming from the communal spaces had on his conditions and that they were not everyday noises he was able to cope with. He also said the issues with his housing worsened with time so they were only now a priority.
 22. In February 2021, the Council sent Mr Y its second banding review decision. It refused Mr Y's request for medical priority.
 23. A few days later, Mr Y complained to the Ombudsman.

Analysis – was there fault by the Council causing injustice?

The Council's decision about registering Mr Y's child as a dependent

24. Mr Y complains about the Council's refusal to award him higher priority on medical grounds under its housing allocations policy. He says, when reviewing his banding, the Council incorrectly told him he could not register his newborn child as a dependent in his household (part a of the complaint).
25. In September 2020, Mr Y contacted the Council to say his partner was expecting their child that week and the child was probably going to live with him. The Council housing officer said that, even if his child lived with him, this would not affect his banding as he was already living in a two-bedroom property.
26. In October, Mr Y contacted the housing officer again. He explained he was concerned that his newborn child was not registered to live with him as a dependant. He said this change should mean he was eligible to bid on two-bedroom properties.
27. The next day, the Council sent Mr Y its banding review decision. It explained to Mr Y that, in order to register his newborn child as a dependant, he needed to complete the online change of circumstances form. It provided information on the criteria that would need to be met, specifically Mr Y, as the applicant, would need to prove that he was the principal guardian, and his home was the dependant's principal home and would remain so for the foreseeable future. This is in line with the Council's Housing Nominations policy.

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28. In January 2021, the Council and Mr Y exchanged a series of emails about which documents the Council required before being able to accept his newborn child as a dependent. At the end of January, the Council confirmed that his housing register application had been updated so that he required a two-bedroom property.
29. Based on the evidence I have seen, I find that it was not clear from the Council's initial contact with Mr Y in September how and whether he would be able to register his newborn as a dependant. This meant it was unclear whether his bedroom need could increase from one to two-bedrooms. However, I find the Council remedied the misinformation around this in its banding review decision letter from October when it provided clear information to Mr Y on how to apply to register his child as a dependent. I understand that it was around this time that Mr Y was arranging for his newborn child to live with him. I, therefore, do not find the Council at fault here. It registered Mr Y's child as a dependant in his household once Mr Y had provided all the relevant information and documents. Mr Y has confirmed that this part of his complaint is now resolved.

The Council's reasons for refusing to award higher banding

30. Mr Y says, when reviewing his banding, the Council incorrectly stated his condition was not caused by his current accommodation and failed to give clear reasons why he was not awarded higher priority on medical grounds (part b of the complaint).
31. The Council's Housing Nominations policy (2015) states, when assessing an application for medical priority, it will review all advice and information provided from the applicant or other professionals involved in their care. It is the Council Housing Officer's final decision whether or not to award priority on medical grounds. When doing so they will look at:
- a) how the current accommodation is causing or affecting the condition;
 - b) how social housing would improve it;
 - c) the severity of the effect the housing is having on the condition;
 - d) the duration of the condition and any expected recovery time;
 - e) the severity in comparison to housing needs of other applicants;
 - f) what other housing options are viable that could improve the situation; and,
 - g) a comparison to the awards made to other applicants on medical grounds.
32. In February 2020, the Council wrote to Mr Y with the outcome of its first banding review. It refused to change Mr Y's banding. It explained that:
- it had considered Mr Y's application and the documents provided. This included Mr Y's statement that he needed access to his own personal outdoor space to avoid feeling trapped in his home;
 - however, the Council decided it did not consider Mr Y's property was worsening his mental health conditions nor did it consider Mr Y moving to a different property would improve his conditions. The Council said this was because Mr Y's mental health conditions had been ongoing for over eight years. It decided Mr Y was likely to continue to experience the same difficulties if he moved to another property; and,
 - as a result, it considered Mr Y was adequately housed in social housing and the number of bedrooms in his property suitably met his needs.

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33. I do not find the Council at fault here. In my view, it has assessed how the current accommodation is causing *or* affecting Mr Y's medical conditions, which is the key consideration it must make under its policy. It has provided reasons why Mr Y did not meet the criteria to award him priority on medical grounds and considered the information and documents provided by Mr Y, including around his claimed need for private outdoor space. I appreciate that Mr Y disagrees with the Council's decision. However, without fault in how the Council made its decision, I cannot question its content.
34. In October, the Council wrote to Mr Y with the outcome of the review of its banding decision. It upheld its decision and decided Mr Y would remain in Band E. The Council said:
- it accepted, based on information provided by Mr Y, his GP and previous clinical psychologist, that Mr Y has anxiety and depression, which was being managed by prescribed medication; and
 - Mr Y had social anxiety since leaving school, which had become steadily worse over a number of years. However, it said, based on the evidence it had seen, it did not consider his current housing was exacerbating his condition or a move would alleviate symptoms. The Council said the medical evidence did not support the request that a private outdoor space would assist Mr Y with his condition either.
35. I do not find the Council at fault here. It reviewed its decision and this was carried out by a senior housing officer who had not been involved in the original decision from February. The senior housing officer provided reasons why it upheld the original decision that were based on the Council's Housing Nominations policy.
36. The Council carried out a second banding review in February 2021. It again refused Mr Y's request for medical priority. It said its decision was based on its Housing Nominations Policy and the medical opinions of its Independent Medical Adviser. It considered Mr Y's current accommodation to be suitable for his needs on medical grounds and there was no evidence to show that his medical condition was caused by his current accommodation. I find the Council at fault here as it is not in line with its nominations policy. As explained in paragraph 29, bullet point a, above, the Council's policy is a two-part consideration about how the current accommodation is causing *or affecting* the condition (emphasis added). I do not find the Council assessed how Mr Y's accommodation was affecting his condition. This caused Mr Y uncertainty and he missed out on having his banding properly reviewed.
37. Additionally, unlike the Council's previous decisions, it explained that the medical opinions of its Independent Medical Adviser were important factors in arriving at its decision. I have considered the report from its Independent Medical Adviser. The report states the following:
- Mr Y's specific medical issues were not considered of particular significance compared to an ordinary person. It is my understanding that this is a test that relates to homelessness applications whereby applicants are assessed on whether there was a priority need if considered vulnerable on medical grounds. It is not clear why Mr Y was being assessed on this basis when he had requested a review of his banding based on medical grounds. This "ordinary person" test for homelessness applications is different to the criteria detailed in paragraph 31 when someone applies for medical priority under the Council's housing allocations scheme; and

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- in relation to the suitability of Mr Y's current accommodation: *"it is contended that this is unsuitable on the basis of there being no private outdoor space. Whilst I acknowledge his wish to have a garden for his exclusive use, this is not considered to be a medical necessity. The current accommodation is suitable on specific medical grounds."* I do not find the Independent Medical Advisor has provided any clear reasons why Mr Y's current accommodation was considered suitable on medical grounds.
38. In my view, the Council's decision was influenced by a medical report that did not correctly apply the requirements of its nominations policy (as detailed in paragraph 31 above). The report also did not provide clear reasons why his current accommodation was suitable on medical grounds, which the Council failed to specify in its decision letter also. This is fault. This caused Mr Y distress and uncertainty as it was not clear why the Council had made its decision.

The Council's consideration of Mr Y's need for private outdoor space

39. Mr Y says, when reviewing his banding, the Council failed to consider his need for private outdoor space to help with his mental health conditions. He says the Council's consideration of his conditions showed a bias against mental health conditions (part c of the complaint).
40. In February 2020, the Council wrote to Mr Y with the outcome of its first banding review. It refused to change Mr Y's banding. At this time, Mr Y was registered as needing a one-bedroom property. The Council explained that the Council awarded one-bedroom properties with outside space to applicants who were over 60 years old, which Mr Y was not.
41. In response to questions I asked the Council, it said the information provided to Mr Y about one-bedroom properties with outside space being allocated to applicants who were over 60 years old was incorrect. This is fault, which caused Mr Y uncertainty about whether he could bid on these properties.
42. The Council confirmed, however, that it does not have a policy that restricts one-bedroom properties with outdoor space to those who are over 60 years old. Rather, when registered providers advertise available one-bedroom properties with outside-space, the Council said these are usually bungalows and tend to be advertised as suitable for those needing ground floor access. This is because the Council wants to make the best use of such accommodation for those needed it most. The Council confirmed this would not stop an applicant with a need for a one-bedroom property bidding on such properties, but the Council and the registered housing provider would look at the applicant whose needs most suited the property. I understand this means those over 60 years old may be likely to be successful in bidding on these property types when it meets their age-related needs. I do not find the Council at fault here as it is entitled to take such factors into consideration when making decisions about housing stock. Without evidence of fault in how it made this decision, I cannot question its content.
43. In its response to my questions, the Council apologised for the miscommunication to Mr Y about this, which I find remedies the injustice caused to him. Based on the Council's response, I am satisfied that Mr Y had not been prevented or restricted from bidding on one-bedroom properties with outdoor space.
44. I consider paragraphs 31 to 38 above provide my analysis of the Council's decision-making around Mr Y's banding review request, which included his claimed need for private outdoor space.

The Council's consideration of the impact of noise on Mr Y

45. Mr Y says, when reviewing his banding, the Council failed to consider the impact that noise from communal outdoor areas was having on his conditions and ability to leave his home (part d of the complaint).
46. In the Council's decision letters from October 2020 and February 2021, it confirmed it had considered the impact of this noise on Mr Y. However, it explained:
- it considered the noise of children playing outside to be ordinary everyday noise of people passing through the communal areas. It did not consider this to meet the threshold of a statutory noise nuisance. This is in line with the Council's published guidance on noise nuisance;
 - there was no evidence to suggest any anti-social behaviour from these activities. It said Mr Y's housing association had received one report of anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance in April 2020. Although Mr Y was not able to identify the individuals responsible for the noise, the housing association took appropriate action by sending general letters to all residents in the block about the report Mr Y made.
47. Based on the evidence I have seen and the Council's response to my questions, it is my understanding that Mr Y did not make any further reports about noise or antisocial behaviour either to the Council or his housing association. I find the Council considered Mr Y's concerns appropriately and provided clear reasons why the information provided did not support a need for higher priority banding. I appreciate Mr Y disagrees with this decision, but this is not evidence of fault.

Delays in the Council's decision-making

48. Mr Y requested a review of the Council's banding decision from February 2020 some days after this decision. The Council provided the outcome of its review in October 2020. This delay is fault. It took the Council over seven months to complete its review. Its Housing Nominations policy states the Council will "*make a decision within eight weeks of the date of the request and advise of the outcome and the grounds for it in writing.*" This caused Mr Y distress and uncertainty. He went to time and trouble chasing the Council for its response.
49. In response to questions that I asked it, the Council accepted it was at fault here and provided an apology to Mr Y in its response to my enquiry letter.
50. The Council also explained that there were delays in providing its second review decision from February 2021 because its officer was waiting for information from Mr Y's GP. It has provided evidence of how it kept Mr Y informed throughout for the reasons for the delay. I do not find the Council at fault here.

Agreed action

51. Within eight weeks of my final decision, the Council has agreed to:
- a) apologise to Mr Y for the fault identified in paragraphs 36 to 38 above, which caused him distress and uncertainty;
 - b) carry out a banding review that complies with the considerations specified in its nominations policy when assessing an application for medical priority (paragraph 31 refers). If Mr Y is unsuccessful again, the Council should provide him with clear reasons why. I understand the Council has offered to undertake a review of Mr Y's banding on social and welfare grounds. If it has not already

carried out this review, I recommend the Council does so alongside the review for increased banding on medical grounds; and,

c) make a payment of £100 to Mr Y for the uncertainty caused, and time and trouble he went to chasing the Council for its review decision from October 2020. This is inline with the Ombudsman's published guidance on remedies.

52. When sending its comments about the draft decision, the Council confirmed it had made the following service improvements as a result of this complaint:
- banding review requests are recorded in each Council officer's diary with an alert at four weeks to enable better monitoring, and
 - banding reviews are now an agenda item on caseworkers' morning meetings.
53. Within three months of my final decision, the Council has agreed to also make the following service improvements:
- reviews its guidance to staff about requesting advice from its Independent Medical Advisors. This is to ensure, when staff ask for advice that affects decisions about priority on medical grounds, the Advisors should be consulted on the considerations detailed in paragraph 31 above.
54. The Ombudsman will need to see evidence that these actions have been completed.

Final decision

55. I have completed my investigation. I have decided to uphold part b of Mr Y's complaint because there is fault by the Council causing him injustice. The Council has agreed to the above recommendations, which are suitable ways for the Council to remedy this.
56. I have decided to not uphold parts a, c and d of Mr Y's complaint because I do not find that there was fault by the Council causing him injustice.
57. I have decided to uphold Mr Y's complaint that there were delays in the Council making its review decision from October 2020. The Council has accepted this and provided an apology for this. I have also recommended the Council makes Mr Y a payment for the time and trouble he went to chasing the Council on this.

Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman's final decision

Summary: Mr X complained the Council was wrong to refuse him a discretionary grant and handled his complaints poorly causing financial hardship and stress. We found no fault in the Council's decision making on the grant but found fault in its complaint handling, causing injustice. We recommended the Council pay Mr X £100 for uncertainty and £100 for time and trouble.

The complaint

1. Mr X complains the Council did not follow a proper decision-making process in refusing his request for a discretionary grant and handled his complaints poorly. He says the Council's actions contributed to financial hardship and emotional distress.
2. Mr X also complains about how the Mayor's office dealt with his concerns and he complains the Council breached data protection and freedom of information laws.

What I have investigated

3. I have investigated the complaint at paragraph 1. At the end of this decision I have explained why I have not investigated other matters.

The Ombudsman's role and powers

4. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this statement, I have used the word fault to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. I refer to this as 'injustice'. If there has been fault which has caused an injustice, we may suggest a remedy. (*Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1), as amended*)
5. We cannot question whether a council's decision is right or wrong simply because the complainant disagrees with it. We must consider whether there was fault in the way the decision was reached. (*Local Government Act 1974, section 34(3), as amended*)
6. This complaint involves events that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government introduced a range of new and frequently updated rules and guidance during this time. We can consider whether the council followed the relevant legislation, guidance and our published "Good Administrative Practice during the response to COVID-19".

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7. The law says we cannot normally investigate a complaint unless we are satisfied the council knows about the complaint and has had an opportunity to investigate and reply. However, we may decide to investigate if we consider it would be unreasonable to notify the council of the complaint and give it an opportunity to investigate and reply (*Local Government Act 1974, section 26(5)*)
 8. We provide a free service, but must use public money carefully. We do not start or may decide not to continue with an investigation if we decide there is another body better placed to consider this complaint (*Local Government Act 1974, section 24A(6)*)
 9. If we are satisfied with a council's actions or proposed actions, we can complete our investigation and issue a decision statement. (*Local Government Act 1974, section 30(1B) and 34H(i), as amended*)

How I considered this complaint

10. I spoke to Mr X and I reviewed documents provided by Mr X and the Council.
11. I gave Mr X and the Council an opportunity to comment on my draft decision. I considered their comments before making a final decision.

What I found

Principles of good administrative practice

12. The Ombudsman publishes a guidance document setting out the standards we expect from bodies in jurisdiction. We issued an addendum in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; "Good Administrative Practice during the response to Covid-19". The following points are relevant in this case.
 - Basic record keeping is vital during crisis working. There should always be a clear audit trail of how and why decisions were made.
 - The basis on which decisions are made and resources allocated, even under emergency conditions, should be open and transparent.
 - Decision reasons should be clear, evidence based and where necessary explained in the particular context and circumstances of that decision.

Discretionary grants

13. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Government introduced support for businesses, including a discretionary grant fund.
14. In May 2020 it published "Local Authorities Discretionary Grants Fund- guidance for local authorities".
15. Councils could give a discretionary grant of £25,000, £10,000 or any sum under £10,000 to businesses which could not access other grant funding (other than the Job Retention Scheme). The value of the payment was at the council's discretion.
16. The Government wanted councils to exercise their local knowledge and discretion and recognised that economic need would vary across the country. So it set some national criteria for the funds but allowed councils to decide which cases to support within those criteria.
17. The funding was aimed at:
 - small and micro businesses.
 - businesses with relatively high fixed property costs.

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- businesses that suffered a significant fall in income due to COVID-19.
 - businesses which occupy a property, or part of a property, with a rateable value or mortgage payments of under £51,000.
18. It considered the following types of business should be a priority for funding but this was a guide only. Councils should decide themselves if a business was similar and, if so, whether it should be eligible for grants. These businesses were:
- small businesses in shared offices or other flexible workspaces, who did not have their own business rates assessment;
 - regular market traders with fixed building costs, such as rent, who did not have their own business rates assessment;
 - bed and breakfasts which paid Council Tax instead of business rates;
 - charity properties, which received charitable rates relief.
19. Where limits to funding available for this scheme required councils to prioritise which types of businesses would receive funding, it would be at their discretion as to which types of business were most relevant to their local economy. There would be no penalty for councils because of their use of discretion to prioritise some business types.
20. In taking decisions on the appropriate level of grant, councils could take into account:
- the level of fixed costs faced by the business
 - the number of employees
 - whether businesses had to close completely and could not trade online and
 - the consequent scale of impact of COVID-19 losses.
21. Councils were to set out their discretionary grant scheme on their website, providing clear guidance on which types of business were prioritised, and how they would decide on the level of grant.

Council's decision making on its discretionary grant policy

22. The Council has provided copy of a report prepared in May 2020 ahead of a meeting with the Mayor and other officials. This sets out its draft discretionary grant policy and the areas where the Council needed to decide on its approach. Of relevance to this case, this included whether to link payments to rental or mortgage costs, because grants were aimed at fixed costs.
23. The Council has also provided brief minutes of the meeting. Of relevance these say the Council would follow the Government guidance.

Council's discretionary grant policy

24. The Council has provided a copy of its discretionary grant policy published in May 2020. The Council says this was published on its website, though this has since been removed. However, it has referred to an online news article of 3 June 2020 which refers to the scheme and provides a link for further details.
25. Grants were payable to:
- small businesses in shared offices or other flexible workspaces, who did not have their own business rates assessment;
 - regular market traders with fixed building costs, such as rent, who did not have their own business rates assessment;

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- bed and breakfasts which paid Council Tax instead of business rates;
 - charity properties, which received charitable rates relief.
 - businesses which occupy a property, or part of a property, with a rateable value or mortgage payments of under £51,000.
26. All businesses were required to demonstrate a significant drop in income as a result of COVID-19.
27. The grants were aimed at fixed costs so the Council would allocate these based on rental/mortgage costs.
28. It would allocate grants based on 25% of the annual fixed rental or mortgage payments demonstrated by the business up to a maximum of £5,000. The final award would depend upon the number of businesses applying for grants.

Council complaints process

29. The Council has provided me with a copy of its complaint policy at the relevant time. This sets out a two stage process.
- Stage 1 – the relevant department will reply within 10 days or explain why it may need longer to reply.
 - Stage 2 – a manager will respond within 10 days or explain any delay.
 - If a person remains unhappy they can contact the Ombudsman.

What happened

30. In June 2020 Mr X applied for a discretionary grant. The application form asked for details and evidence of ongoing fixed building relating costs, for example, a lease or mortgage agreement. Mr X said he used his home as his office and so paid council tax and other costs. He provided a council tax document in support.
31. The Council asked Mr X for evidence of rental or mortgage costs and Mr X confirmed he had none. The Council then refused a grant as Mr X had not met its criteria.
32. Upon Mr X's request for an explanation the Council said he did not qualify as he had no annual rent or mortgage costs.
33. Mr X complained that other councils paid grants to people in his circumstances.
34. On 7 August a Council officer told Mr X they would discuss the matter with the head of the department to see if there was anything they could do.
35. Mr X chased a response in September. When he chased again in October his email bounced back as the address was no longer in use.
36. On 3 October Mr X complained the Council had closed its department while his case was still open. He asked it to explain its lack of response to him and why it would not pay a grant when other councils did.
37. Mr X chased the Council again in November.
38. The Council has provided a note of a call with Mr X on 17 December. It reports that Mr X expected a call from the head of the department. The officer explained he did not qualify for a grant under the Council's policy.
39. The Council provided a complaint response to Mr X on 21 December 2020. It explained:

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- Once it processed all applications the discretionary grant fund team returned to their previous roles within the Council. As it had already issued a response to Mr X's request it closed his case.
 - It could not locate where his emails were sent.
 - It accepts the email address provided to him should have been rerouted to a monitored email account. It was not and that is why he received no reply.
 - Each council could decide on its own policy. It refused him a grant based on its agreed policy as he had no fixed rent or mortgage costs.
40. On 23 December Mr X asked to go to stage 2. He expressed concern the Council could not find some of his emails as this raised data protection issues.
41. Mr X also asked the Mayor to look into this matter. He gave details of his complaint and repeated this in correspondence to the Council in February 2021. In summary:
- He asked why the Council did not give reasons for its refusal alongside its initial rejection.
 - He questioned why the Council did not take account of other fixed costs such as council tax, utility bills and a car lease.
 - He asked why it could not find his emails.
 - He asked why it did not respond to his complaint of 3 October within 10 days.
 - He said the Council had still not addressed why he had not heard from the head of the department as promised on 7 August. When he phoned the Council staff also told him they would pass his complaint to the head of department.
42. The Council responded on 4 February 2021. In summary:
- It accepted the content of its initial decision letter was below standard.
 - It acknowledged no-one spoke to him further to the email of 7 August. Staff did not tell him the Council had committed to look into the application further. However, had they done so, the decision would have been the same as it was made correctly in line with policy.
 - It agreed the email of 7 August should have prompted further action. It would take this into account when creating temporary teams in future.
 - It deactivated the email account once it had issued decisions issued on all applications, including his.
 - It could only consider the fixed costs listed in its policy and it could not now change its policy.
 - It accepted it should have located the emails and now asked him for copies.
 - It accepted its responses and follow ups were below its standards.
 - It apologised for the issues Mr X faced.
43. Mr X then complained to the Ombudsman. He was unhappy the Council had refused him a grant in circumstances where other councils paid it. And he was unhappy with its handling of the matter.
44. In response to enquiries the Council provided relevant documents, outlined above. It also said:

- It acknowledged the revenues manager failed to communicate with Mr X earlier in the process. But as he was the relevant manager he was suitably placed to respond to Mr X's complaint at stage 2 of the process.
- This was its first business discretionary grant scheme. It was an extremely busy time and demand on the service was huge. Mr X's requests for further information were lost in the process.
- Following the closure of the scheme it changed the automated decision notice sent out following a refusal of an application to insert a reason for refusal.
- It accepted there was a delay responding to emails and the service could have managed customers' expectations better by explaining that it was very busy and consequently there would likely be a delay in responding. The service could also have provided an escalation route should the need arise and have provided officer names and contact details. Once a matter is escalated it should be logged in the system as a complaint and progress monitored to ensure a response.
- It acknowledged that when the email address for the scheme was deactivated it could have put on an automated response to advise customers of an alternative email address should they still have a query in relation to the closed scheme.
- The service now quality checks a random sample of work to ensure it is thorough when making decisions and referring to all correspondence involved.

Findings

45. The Council had wide discretion in creating its discretionary grant policy. However, it had to follow a proper decision-making process in doing so. We would expect it to take account of the Government guidance and have recorded reasons to support its decision making.
46. The Council has provided records of its decision-making and a copy of its policy. These show it considered the Government guidance and its policy closely mirrors the guidance. Of relevance to this case, the guidance said councils should support those with high fixed property costs. The Council interpreted this as including rent and mortgage costs. While other councils may have decided to take into account other costs, it was for each council to apply the guidance as they saw fit. I find no fault in how the Council decided on its policy.
47. I am satisfied on the evidence the Council published its policy on its website. This made clear the qualifying criteria for the grant. I also note the criteria was detailed within the application form.
48. The Council refused Mr X a grant as he had no rental or mortgage costs as required under its policy. I find no fault in how the Council reached this decision.
49. The Council did not immediately give reasons for its refusal, however it did so upon Mr X's request for an explanation. I therefore do not find fault. However, I am pleased the Council has since taken steps to include reasons in future.
50. The Council offered to raise Mr X's case with its head of department then did not do so. This amounts to fault. Mr X was left uncertain whether the Council would change its decision from August to December. The Council has since accepted and apologised for this shortfall. However, I consider it should provide a further remedy to Mr X in recognition of the uncertainty he faced and the time and trouble he was put to chasing a response. I am satisfied with the actions outlined by the Council to prevent recurrence.

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51. The Council did not reply to Mr X's emails, it did not progress calls and it delayed responding to his complaint. This amounts to fault. The Council has since accepted and apologised for this shortfall. It also explained why it closed the email account. However, I consider it should provide a further remedy to Mr X in recognition of the uncertainty he faced and the time and trouble he was put to chasing a response, as above. I am satisfied with the actions outlined by the Council to prevent recurrence and to better manage customer expectations.
52. I am satisfied the Council's final response addressed Mr X's queries, including an explanation as to why it deactivated the email account. This response was provided by a manager in line with the Council's complaints policy, although this was the same head of department Mr X had expected to hear from. While it would have been good practice to have an independent person provide the stage 2 response this is not part of the Council's policy and in the circumstances of this case, this does not meet our threshold for a finding of fault.

Agreed action

53. To remedy the injustice set out above I recommend the Council carry out the following actions within one month of the date of my decision:
- Pay Mr X £100 for uncertainty and
 - Pay Mr X £100 for time and trouble.
54. The Council has accepted my recommendations.

Final decision

55. I find no fault in the Council's decision making but I find fault in its complaint handling. The Council has accepted my recommendations and I have completed my investigation.

Parts of the complaint that I did not investigate

56. Mr X is unhappy with how the Mayor's office dealt with his concerns. However, he had not complained to the Council about the conduct of the elected Mayor at the time of contacting the Ombudsman. I did not investigate this complaint as it is premature; it is right to first give the Council the opportunity to investigate and reply. If Mr X remains unhappy after the Council's consideration, he can contact the Ombudsman and we will consider whether we can and should investigate.
57. I did not investigate Mr X's complaints that the Council breached data protection and freedom of information laws. This is because the Information Commissioner's Office is the appropriate body to consider such complaints.

Investigator's final decision on behalf of the Ombudsman

Agenda Item 9

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 6 December 2021

Report author: Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office

Title: Town Hall Quarter programme: Town Hall and Colosseum Refurbishment Business Cases

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 On 18 January 2021, Cabinet approved the initiation of the Town Hall Quarter programme and associated vision which sought to regenerate the area at the northern end of Watford High Street to realise the vision of *'a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, creating exciting new opportunities for our residents, businesses and community, contributing to Watford's prosperity and success'*.
- 1.2 The ambition to regenerate the area at the northern end of the High Street and create a vibrant public space has been present for some time but the Covid-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to redefine the programme to ensure that it could leverage maximum benefit for those sectors of our community significantly impacted by the Covid lockdowns. It is not a programme that operates in isolation from the wider commitments to our community; the programme is strategically aligned to the council's ambitions, including as a direct deliverable within the Council Plan 2020-24, and contributes towards many of our key corporate strategies. This includes our ambitious Economic Development Strategy launched in June 2021 following the Covid-19 lockdowns to support our local economy and businesses, our wide-reaching Cultural Strategy, refreshed in November 2020 to build upon the legacy of our popular Watford Together initiative which supported so many last year and our Commercial and Innovation Strategy which seeks to embed a commercial approach into everything we do.
- 1.3 The Town Hall Quarter programme is an ambitious, exciting and innovative plan to redefine a key part of our thriving town centre. It will ensure that we retain our regional draw, securing our reputation as not just a great place to shop, but as a vibrant and thrilling place for culture and the arts, which simultaneously embraces its responsibility to both heritage and sustainability. The programme represents a unique opportunity to deliver a bold vision of the future for the town, combining our ambitions for place shaping and public realm enhancements alongside an active commitment to businesses, our local economy, culture and our community.

- 1.4 This report presents to Cabinet two Outline Business Cases in relation to the Town Hall Quarter programme; the refurbishment of the Colosseum and the refurbishment of the Town Hall which, in turn, allow a whole range of benefits to be realised.
- 1.5 The Colosseum refurbishment Outline Business Case is attached at Appendix 1 and recommends a full commercial refurbishment of the Colosseum building which will resolve some of the integral internal defects, whilst allowing the council to attract and procure an experienced operator who will recommence a diverse programme of events, activities and performances within this much loved venue. The refurbishment of the building will help to create a cultural hub at the northern end of the High Street, complementing the varied cultural facilities already present across the town and the refreshed public realm space outside and around the historic Town Hall. The refurbishment of the Colosseum will provide an opportunity for the council to drive a commercial contract with the operator whilst the reconfigured space, developed in conjunction with the procured operator, will, subject to the final agreement, provide additional opportunities for existing Watford cultural organisations to utilise the space, particularly in the day time. Subject to approval of these business cases, it is expected that the refurbished Colosseum will reopen, with a new operator, in autumn 2023. The implementation plan can be seen in section 6.7 of Appendix 1.
- 1.6 The Town Hall refurbishment is another key component of the programme. The Outline Business Case attached at Appendix 2 recommends a full refurbishment of the existing Town Hall building which will facilitate the following changes:
- A radical 74% reduction in the floor space required by the council as they retain the agile ways of working demonstrated over the past 18 months. This will allow for a new, more efficient work space to be designed for both staff and members, focusing on the need for collaboration, promoting health and wellbeing and allowing customers to be provided with the best service. It will reduce the cost of the council operation and allow for the use of the iconic Town hall building to be redefined, as below.
 - The relocation of Watford Museum from its current home at Benskin House to the heritage rooms at the front of the Town Hall providing a new, interactive and exciting experience for residents and visitors on the rich and diverse history of our town.
 - The implementation of an Innovation and Incubation Hub to support small and medium enterprises across the region to become established businesses, boosting employment through support packages and providing sector growth through occupants 'clustering' in one place.
 - Opening the Town Hall up for our community, not just through access to the museum and Innovation Hub, but also through the siting of a café facing and opening out onto the new Town Square, linking the refreshed public realm space immediately adjacent to the Town Hall with the building itself. As well as providing greater openness of the Town Hall and access to local democracy, the new space will provide fit-for-purpose, value for money space available for the use of

community organisations (e.g. meeting rooms, counselling space, touchdown working space)

It should be noted that the Town Hall Refurbishment business case is predicated on the individual business cases for the Museum and the Innovation and Incubation Hub. These are attached as appendices to the Town Hall business case for approval by Cabinet. It should be noted that Appendix 2B is exempt due to the potential identification of individuals whilst Appendix 2C is exempt as a result of commercial sensitivity.

Subject to approval of the business case, it is expected that the refurbishments will be completed by spring 2024 which will then allow for the Innovation Hub to launch between July and September 2024 and the museum in May 2025 following completion of the fit out. The implementation plan can be seen in section 6.7 of Appendix 2.

- 1.7 The refurbishment of both the Town Hall and Colosseum are being complemented by extensive decarbonisation works following the council's successful application for funding from the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The £3.7m grant, which highlights the council's commitment to sustainability, will be used to refurbish windows, heating control and lighting improvements, cavity wall and roof insulation enhancements and the introduction of photovoltaic panels and storage; all of which will introduce enhanced utility efficiency contributing to the council's sustainability target and reducing electricity, gas and water consumption as well as the overall carbon footprint of the building.
- 1.8 In line with the council's approach to programme and project management across the organisation, a flexible resourcing model is proposed. Given that the need for project management is expected to change as the programme progresses, this approach will allow resource to flex in line with the programme implementation plan. This will also ensure that costs associated with resourcing are similarly proactively managed with any resource not required at redeployed to other programmes and/or projects within the council, representing a saving to the programme and keeping costs to a minimum where possible. The Programme Board and Member Steering Group will maintain an overview of the resourcing model.

2.0 Risks

The scale and nature of the proposed projects are recognised and so consideration of how they will be delivered, managed and governed will be key to its success. As a result, risk management will be vital in ensuring that the projects are delivered successfully. The full process for managing risks is detailed in the Management Cases of the relevant appendices but key project risks are captured below. A full list of risks will be actively monitored by the council's Project Manager via the project risk log.

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
The Colosseum is not re-open by autumn 2023	Impact on ability for operator to ensure that the venue remains viable	Clear programme plan in place with sufficient contingency and impact of any delay on operators fully understood	Treat	2 x 2 = 4
Unable to secure an acceptable commercial deal with an operator for the Colosseum as a result of refurbishment not meeting expectations	Not able to transfer the building risk, reduce the management fee and meet our other aspirations (community programme)	Soft market testing undertaken to understand operator requirements for the building and reasonable assumptions in relation to a commercial deal	Treat	2 x 4 = 8
Increase in Covid-19 cases leads to another national lockdown	Extended timeline for completion. Unable to complete Colosseum refurbishment by Autumn 2023 / Town Hall refurbishment by Spring 2024	Build allowance into programmes for working in Covid safe environment at all times.	Treat	2 x 4 = 8
Lack of ability to obtain listed building consent with plans not agreed by Historic England	Change of design, additional costs and extended timelines	Engage with Historic England and our internal Conservation Planning Officer as plans are developed	Treat	2 x 4 = 8
Cost of building materials and / or labour increase	Increase costs, change of design	Sufficient contingency built into cost plan	Treat	2 x 4 = 8

Stakeholders are not kept informed on progress of the works due to poor communication channels	Disengagement with the project, lack of clarity on when the venue will reopen impacting new launch	Clear communications plan in place and updates provided to THQ Stakeholder Group and Member Steering Group	Treat	2 x 2 = 4
Individual project business cases are considered no longer viable as a result of increased cost, unanticipated issues, scope creep or programme slippage	Space under utilised in the Town Hall as unable to be filled by space allocated in RIBA s.2 design	Contingency planning underway in relation to other opportunities / options to use the space.	Treat	2 x 3 = 6

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the Colosseum Refurbishment business case, RIBA Stage 2 designs, implementation plan and the assumptions and constraints on which these are based.
- 3.2 That Cabinet approves the Town Hall Refurbishment business case, implementation plan and the assumptions and constraints on which these are based, including the associated Museum Outline Business Case and Innovation and Incubation Hub Outline Business Case, shown within the Appendices.
- 3.3 That the financial resource necessary to deliver the next phase of the Town Hall Quarter programme, including in relation to the Town Hall and Colosseum refurbishments is presented to full council for approval in January 2022.

Further information:

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Report approved by: Donna Nolan, Managing Director

4.0 Programme Context: The Town Hall Quarter

- 4.1 The Town Hall Quarter is an ambitious and comprehensive 10-year programme of activity at the northern end of Watford High Street to realise a vision of:

'a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, creating exciting new opportunities for our residents, businesses and community, contributing to Watford's prosperity and success'

The Town Hall Quarter is a key deliverable within our Council Plan 2020-24. It is a programme for the community, at the heart of the community and brings together a number of key council projects into a single programme of work, with each component contributing to the overall vision. It is a programme repurposed for the Covid era, recognising the significant benefits it will bring to our community; providing support for our businesses after the successive lockdowns, empowering our cultural organisations, celebrating and protecting our local heritage and making a reality our sustainability aspirations. It also seeks to cement the town's role as a regional shopping and visitor destination and a centre for the arts whilst contributing to our Covid-19 renewal alongside our Road to Renewal plan.

- 4.2 The existing programme was formally initiated in January 2021 following approval by the council's Cabinet and, subsequently, Full Council. Approval of the programme gave authority and budget for the next phase of discovery work to commence. This first phase, which has seen the programme resourcing secured, governance arrangements implemented and individual project business cases developed have culminated in the development of the Colosseum Refurbishment and Town Hall Refurbishment business cases, approval of which will allow the next phase of the programme to be initiated.
- 4.3 Whilst the ambition to improve the area around the Town Hall, which is regarded as manifestly underutilised, has been present for some time, the emergence of Covid-19 and the development of our new Strategic Framework, led by our Council Plan 2020-24, provided an opportunity to strategically align the Town Hall Quarter programme with the wider renewal of the town following the successive lockdowns. Please see section 6 for more information on the strategic alignment of the programme with the council's wider ambitions.
- 4.4 The Town Hall Quarter programme is now expected to radically transform the area around the Town Hall, securing a thriving new quarter with new homes, employment and public space, which will be underpinned by a revitalised creative, cultural and heritage offer. It will revitalise Watford, providing a huge economic boost post Covid and very much align with the council's own commercial aspirations, securing our financial future so that we can continue to invest in services for our residents and businesses.

5.0 Programme Context: Town Hall Quarter Vision

- 5.1 The vision, the outward facing description of the programme, which defines the improvements, innovations, new services, facilities and ways of working, is essential to encouraging and gaining the commitment and support of our many stakeholders interested and impacted by the programme. The right vision describes a compelling future, matches the degree of transformational change the programme will deliver, and needs to be bold and describe the desired future. Having an effective and compelling vision which resonates with those across the town is therefore a critical element in ensuring that the programme has the right foundations and that there is a clear and consistent approach to communications and messages to stakeholders.
- 5.2 The following vision for the programme, which incorporates a greater focus on community involvement and outcomes, has been agreed by the Town Hall Quarter Member Steering Group and approved by Cabinet:

Delivering for our Community – At the Heart of our Community

Our ambitious and transformational Town Hall Quarter programme will deliver a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, creating exciting new opportunities for our residents, businesses and community, contributing to Watford's prosperity and success.

Through the scheme, the council will:

- Make better use of our historic Town Hall, opening it up for greater community and business use, securing its long term future and putting it firmly at the centre of the life of the town
- Boost local jobs, offering an inspiring, dynamic and well-connected new space for people to work, start and grow their businesses
- Generate work opportunities for our young people, providing attractive career paths and links to local employment
- Champion a greener, more sustainable Watford, contributing to our 2030 net carbon zero target
- Anchor the north of the town centre, forging a new generation High Street in Watford, generating greater footfall and activity as more people live, work and visit the area
- Celebrate our diverse culture and heritage, connecting Watford's rich history with that of our Town Hall, creating an innovative new home for our Museum and using local voices to tell the town's story
- Strengthen Watford's regional role as a centre for culture and the arts, opening up more creative and community uses for Watford Colosseum, encouraging up and coming artists and performers

- Secure much needed new high quality homes within an attractive new neighbourhood
- Create appealing and welcoming new outdoor places where people can meet, relax and spend time
- Demonstrate how we make best use of our resources, making sound financial decisions and achieving positive returns on our investments

REJUVENATE, RENEW, REVITALISE

6.0 Strategic Alignment

6.1 The Town Hall Quarter programme aligns and contributes to a range of strategic ambitions committed to by the council.

6.1.1 Council Plan 2020-24

The existing Council Plan was approved in July 2020 and this programme supports and delivers many of the ambitions outlined within the plan including:

- **A council which serves our residents**
 - **Improve succession planning and talent management and recruitment** – by creating a new, modern, innovative and fit for purpose space and an agile working culture which will attract top talent.
 - **Deliver the council’s financial recovery** – by reducing the financial revenue burden of aging buildings and creating opportunities to commercialise our estate.
 - **Ensure that the council’s future office accommodation is fit for purpose** – by co-designing space for our staff, ensuring that it allows for collaborative working (and the benefits of working from home is retained) whilst using a significantly smaller physical footprint.
 - **Enhance agile ways of working for our staff** – by ensuring that the future office accommodation and access to technology allows for hybrid working and that our organisational culture and values and behaviours are redesigned to support more effective ways of working.
- **A thriving, diverse and creative town**
 - **Progress our plans for the Town Hall Quarter** – by continuing to pursue a joint venture partner for the development of the area around the Town Hall and creating a regional hub of culture and arts within the Town Hall and Colosseum buildings and the public realm space created by the New Neighbourhoods project.

- **Drive the economic recovery of Watford** – by attracting more visitors to our Museum, Innovation and Incubation Hub, Town Hall and therefore the town centre.
 - **Invigorate our small and medium businesses across the town** – by creating an Innovation and Incubation Hub to support and grow small businesses providing them with the post-Covid boost needed which will allow them to move to larger premises within the town in the future, creating additional employment opportunities for local people.
 - **Ensure that the council is a greener organisation** – by implementing a range of green initiatives within the Town Hall and Colosseum to decarbonise these important heritage buildings, and reduce the council’s carbon footprint. Council staff working in a more agile way will also reduce the number of staff travelling to work, reducing congestion on Watford’s roads and public transport, in line with our Sustainable Transport Strategy.
- **A happy and healthy town**
 - **Maximise the cultural opportunities for the town** – by bringing together the Museum, Colosseum, Library and West Herts College across same area, utilising new public realm space to animate the area and promote cultural organisations and events.
 - **Review and reinvigorate how we celebrate our local heritage** – by moving our Museum to the Town Hall, utilising space freed up by the council, and developing new, interactive exhibitions focused on the celebration of local heritage.
 - **Enhance our public spaces** – by opening up the Town Hall on to new public spaces within the Town Hall Quarter to attract visitors to the area as a destination in its own right.
 - **Ensure our community buildings benefit local residents** - by opening up the Town Hall to visitors to our Museum and working closely with our partners across the town to support our cultural organisations to access the space that they need.

6.1.2 Cultural Strategy 2018-25

A refurbished Colosseum and new Museum will both support the council’s ambition to “grow sustainable opportunities for creative enterprise, cultural provision and participation for our local communities, businesses and visitors which will, in turn, strengthen Watford’s appeal as a creative destination.”

Our Cultural Strategy outlines the importance of both culture and heritage to Watford with a number of cultural venues housed within heritage buildings. This will continue with the refurbishment of the Colosseum, the museum’s relocation to the historic Grade II listed Town Hall (including the development of the main galleries within the

most prominent heritage spaces within the building) and the re-established link between the Town Hall and Colosseum.

The Cultural Strategy outlines the importance of creative and engaging experiences for the community, signposting to key heritage and cultural sites and growing the audiences who engage with heritage and culture. The Museum will be vital to the delivery of this – acting as a central hub for the wider service, showcasing Watford’s heritage and signposting visitors around the town and delivering a programme of activities, outreach and education that is available to all members of the community. Similarly, the refurbishment of the Colosseum will serve to attract a commercial operator who can present a diverse and competitive programme of events and performances, providing access to culture for larger proportions of the community. Subject to the financial business model of the operator, the repurposing of the space could also meet the ambition of increasing the utilisation of the existing Colosseum space, particularly for community uses during the day, supporting cultural organisations following the impact of Covid-19.

6.1.3 Economic Growth Strategy 2021-25

Our Economic Growth Strategy sets out the council’s medium term approach to support businesses and the local economy as it revives and thrives following Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns. The Town Hall Quarter programme will support the local economy through the implementation of the Innovation and Incubation Hub which seeks to support small start-up businesses in a specific range of sectors, offering a structured growth pathway for businesses, through a range of packages, resulting in newly created businesses moving onto their own accommodation as they expand, making way for newcomers to start their journey.

The refurbishment of the Colosseum will also serve to attract increased visitors to our town centre, supporting our local businesses. A recent report published by Arts Council England, A High Street Renaissance, found that people strongly support culture in their towns and cities, with 69% of respondents saying they thought having cultural spaces made their local area a better place to live. The report specifically pointed to the potential of culture to draw people back to the high streets for in-person experiences.

The Town Hall Quarter will play a big part in encouraging visitors to come into the town centre and increasing overall footfall. Both local, and visitors from further afield, will be attracted to visit the town centre to visit the Museum, work from the Innovation and Incubation Hub, go to the Colosseum or use the community space within the Town Hall. The associated public realm space and new neighbourhood will similarly serve to bring further footfall to the High Street. Public engagement to date has indicated that significant numbers of potential visitors to the Colosseum would combine their visit with another activity, such as a meal in one of the town centre restaurants, a drink in one of the bars or pubs or making use of the diverse retail offer in the High Street.

6.1.4 Commercial and Innovation Strategy 2021-25

Our Commercial and Innovation Strategy promotes commerciality throughout the organisation in everything that it does. This includes the pivoting away from a focus on retail and other property investments and towards other forms of investment. The Innovation and Incubation Hub is one such idea: it does not require the investment in real estate, rather it is the re-purposing of an existing asset allowing revenue to be generated from running a facility which supports local businesses. The scheme therefore fulfils a place-shaping role while also providing an opportunity to generate revenue for the council (in the context of more restrictions on borrowing for investments which reduce the options for increasing the property portfolio) to help sustain the council's finances.

The refurbishment of the Colosseum, and the subsequent procurement of an operator in the context of working from a refurbished building, provides an opportunity for the council to transfer liability for building repair and maintenance liability to the new operator, although this cannot be guaranteed at this stage. Commerciality of the building would be enhanced as a result of the work meaning that there would be a higher chance of having no operator management fee. Should this be delivered, not only would this deliver a saving of approximately £165,000 per annum, there would also be the potential for income to come to the council from the contract, increasing and diversifying the organisation's income streams.

7.0 Colosseum Refurbishment Business Case

The Colosseum is a popular and much loved regional entertainment venue situated adjacent to the Town Hall in Watford town centre. The refurbishment of the building is an integral part of the Town Hall Quarter programme in providing a new cultural hub in the centre of the town. The Colosseum, which was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, has previously been managed by an operator whose contract was terminated by mutual agreement in December 2020. The cessation of the operator contract provides an ideal opportunity to undertake much needed refurbishment and reconfiguration work to the building whilst causing the minimum disruption possible. The programme of work expects the building to reopen with a new operator in autumn 2023. The business case at Appendix 1 is concerned with and recommends the full refurbishment of the Colosseum building.

7.1 Strategic Case

Refurbishment of the building will significantly reduce the risk of building failure, provide an opportunity to replace end-of-life equipment and facilitate a more beneficial commercial arrangement with a future operator, seeking to pass the building and maintenance liability to the operator and aspirationally negating the need for an operator management fee. This will allow a diverse and varied programme of events, activities, entertainment and performances to be held at the Colosseum for all members of our diverse community. The project will considerably

extend the lifetime of the building whilst ensuring it is energy efficient, meets modern requirements in terms of accessibility and compliance and importantly respects the building's heritage and history.

7.2 Economic Case

Whilst a number of options, including do nothing, do minimum and a building only refurbishment, were considered, the only option which allows the council to deliver on each of the project objectives is to proceed with the delivery of a comprehensive refurbishment of the building systems, fabric and plant to replace end-of-life equipment, address backlog maintenance issues and bring the building up to modern standards. The recommended option would also see the delivery of a programme of enhancements to the building, addressing issues that currently negatively impact on the building's commercial operation.

Aside from the benefits to the actual building, the refurbishment will deliver a wider economic contribution to the town by bringing more people into the town centre, with public engagement to date confirming that visitors to the Colosseum would combine their visit with a meal, drink or shopping trip. In addition to volunteering opportunities, it would also provide additional job opportunities for 25 full time and 70 casual staff and provide further opportunities for Watford residents to access and participate in arts and culture. Furthermore, the council is keen to support and provide space for the use of other community groups in the town and reconfiguration of the space should help to ensure that the space is not under-utilised, particularly in the day.

7.3 Commercial Case

Two procurement processes will be undertaken in order to deliver the project. The first of these, commencing in March 2022, will be for a two stage Design and Build contract for the delivery of the refurbishment, which takes into account the council's objectives, risk appetite and wider constraints and dependencies. This route offers the best prospect of programme adherence and transfers programme, cost and residual design risk to the contractor. This route also would enable synergies to be explored with the Town Hall refurbishment (see Appendix 2), which would provide time and cost efficiencies to the council. The second procurement relates to securing an operator for which a Competitive Procedure with Negotiation procurement route will be followed to enable the council to discuss a number of different solutions and variations throughout the process to ensure the best outcome is achieved, including input to the final building design development process from operators. Whilst the council is keen to secure a commercial deal, this is likely to be reflected in the length of the lease which could be up to 25 years and any community use of the space will similarly be subject to these negotiations. Soft market testing to date has indicated that there is market interest in a contract for operating the Colosseum whilst public engagement has shown that there is a strong public desire for the Colosseum to reopen and provide a range of diverse and varied events, activities and performances.

7.4 Financial Case

The full scope of the proposals is contained within the RIBA Stage 2 report and is estimated to cost in the region of £12,390,000; £11,350,000 for essential works and £1,040,000 for building enhancements. £8.9M is currently available within the capital programme, therefore, the affordability of the proposals is dependent upon the New Neighbourhoods Project for the Town Hall Quarter being brought to fruition. In addition, further capital receipts will need to be generated from the rationalisation of other council-held property. The table in section 10.1.1 shows the breakdown of the funding for the programme.

The financial benefits arising from the Colosseum refurbishment project are all dependent on the outcome of the new operator procurement and the council's assumptions regarding the contract that will be secured through this project. The aspirations from this process are that the Colosseum will become cost neutral for the council through having no management fee to pay to the operator, which it is hoped might become a positive payment to the council over the life of the contract, and no retained building risk or liability. If these outcomes are secured from the new operator contract the council will save the existing budget of approximately £165,000, although even if this saving is possible, it may not be realised immediately depending on the final arrangement.

7.5 Management Case

The project will be managed via a designated Project Board reporting into the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board, chaired by the Managing Director. This will allow risks, issues and any potential changes to be actively managed and, where necessary, escalated with a full understanding of any implications. Political oversight will be maintained by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor and in place since the initiation of the programme, which will continue to allow ongoing progress reporting and feedback from Members.

8.0 Town Hall Refurbishment Business Case

The Town Hall is a 1930s heritage building located at the northern end of Watford town centre and is currently the home of Watford Borough Council. However, the iconic building is under-utilised, particularly given the change in ways of working as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and is in need of significant refurbishment which will ensure its long term sustainability for ongoing use by our community. There is therefore an opportunity to fundamentally change the way in which the Town Hall is used, to seek to maximise the value the building brings to the community and council through finding additional uses for the space with a particular objective to open it up for more community use.

8.1 Strategic Case

The outline business case, included as Appendix 2, proposes the refurbishment of the building and its future use as the location of Watford Museum, a significantly reduced but predominantly collaborative council space and the home of the proposed Innovation and Incubation Hub. Also on-site would be a public café opening out on to the new town square delivered through the public realm improvements by our New Neighbourhood Joint Venture partners and space for community and commercial use. As well as providing greater openness of the Town Hall and access to local democracy, the new space will provide fit-for-purpose, value for money space available for the use of community organisations (e.g. meeting rooms, counselling space, touchdown working space) opening the Town Hall up to the community. New council office space on a much reduced footprint with modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation will provide modern facilities for use by members and staff and is expected to provide greater opportunities for staff to collaborate, improve staff wellbeing, motivation and morale and ultimately provide a better experience for customers and an enhanced ability for the council to recruit and retain high quality staff. This will enable the council's office accommodation footprint to reduce by around 74% reducing the running cost of the council occupied accommodation by approximately £300,000 per annum. Additionally there will be less requirement for staff to travel, reducing local congestion and improving the council's carbon footprint whilst new accommodation for members will allow them to meet and engage with residents and the community, improving the council's reputation as a professional organisation.

The anticipated cost of the works stand at £11.55m and cover not just the much needed refurbishment of the main Town Hall building, but also the fit out for the Museum towards the front of the building, on both the ground floor and first floor, which currently house the Committee Rooms the fit out of the Innovation and Incubation hub, the demolition of the semi-permanent building known as the Terrapin adjacent to Peace Prospect and the refurbishment of the Annexe, situated towards the rear of the main Town Hall building.

These works would collectively drive significant benefit to residents, the town and the council:

- A refreshed, exciting and modern museum offer would be available in the heritage rooms and part of the ground floor of the Town Hall for residents and visitors, creating a cultural hub with the Colosseum and driving further footfall to the town centre, supporting our local businesses. This would allow the sale of Benskin House which is no longer suitable as a location for a modern museum and realise a capital receipt.
- The Innovation and Incubation Hub, managed by an experienced operator, would serve to support the local economy and actively grow small start-up businesses. It would offer a structured growth pathway for businesses, through a range of packages, resulting in newly created businesses moving onto their own

accommodation as they expand, making way for newcomers to start their journey.

- The introduction of agile ways of working for the council and the adoption of new values and behaviours will allow the council footprint to reduce significantly freeing up the existing space for the above uses. The Town Hall space available for council staff and Members will be focused on collaboration, building on the lessons learnt and new ways of working embraced over the last 18 months to provide the best service for customers, residents and businesses.

8.2 Economic Case

Whilst a number of options, including do nothing, do minimum and a building refurbishment with an extension, were considered, the only affordable option which allows the council to deliver on each of the project objectives is to proceed with the delivery of a comprehensive refurbishment of the existing buildings and the fit out to serve the proposed future uses of the Town Hall:

8.2.1 Town Hall Building

Whilst the refurbishment of the Town Hall itself will bring benefits including a reduction in ongoing repairs and maintenance costs, enhanced utility efficiency and improved accessibility, it also enables significant benefits through creating space from which the other uses can operate with the key benefits being delivered by those uses.

8.2.2 Watford Museum

The relocated and reimagined Museum is expected to deliver a range of benefits including a 150% increase in visitor numbers, 200% increase in volunteer hours and increased employment within the town. It will also provide an enhanced visitor experience, maximising opportunities to access and participate in heritage and culture activities, providing additional opportunities for skills development and adult learning and delivering an education programme for young people and children. In addition, there is a significantly increased estimated economic impact from a new museum to the town of £380k per annum, from £104k currently.

8.2.3 Innovation and Incubation Hub

Similarly, the Innovation and Incubation Hub will support small and medium enterprises across the region to become established businesses, boosting employment through support packages and providing sector growth through occupants 'clustering' in one place. It will also create higher value direct job and indirect local supply chain employment contributing to the local economy and breathe new life into the Town Hall Quarter as part of its regeneration through the provision of a flexible space for businesses to grow, reducing the need to commute away from the town. It is estimated that every two years 60 people in 20 businesses will 'graduate' from the Hub with six businesses successfully transitioning from being

classed as 'micro' to 'small'. Whilst longer term benefits such as an increased business survival rate, an increase in FTE job numbers across the town and an increased number of business collaborations are expected, these will be confirmed in the Full Business Case in August 2023 following the procurement of an operator for the Hub.

8.2.4 Community and the Council

As well as providing greater openness of the Town Hall and access to local democracy, the new space will provide fit-for-purpose, value for money space available for the use of community organisations (e.g. meeting rooms, counselling space, touchdown working space) opening the Town Hall up to the community. New council office space on a much reduced footprint with modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation will provide modern facilities for use by members and staff and is expected to provide greater opportunities for staff to collaborate, improve staff wellbeing, motivation and morale and ultimately provide a better experience for customers with an enhanced ability for the council to recruit and retain high quality staff. There will also be less requirement for staff to travel, reducing local congestion in line with our Sustainable Transport Strategy and improving the council's carbon footprint whilst new accommodation for members will allow them to meet and engage with residents and the community.

8.3 Commercial Case

Two procurement processes will be undertaken in order to deliver the project. The first of these, commencing in August 2022, will be for a two stage Design and Build contract for the delivery of the refurbishment. This route, which takes into account the council's objectives, risk appetite and wider constraints and dependencies offers the best prospect of programme adherence and transfers programme, cost and residual design risk to the contractor. This route also would enable synergies to be explored with the Colosseum refurbishment (see Appendix 1), which would provide time and cost efficiencies to the council. The second procurement relates to securing an operator for the Innovation and Incubation Hub. The council does not have the capacity or capability to manage the operation of a hub directly. Therefore the proposal is to go to the market to procure an operator. The exact nature of any commercial terms would need to be established; however, the model that appears to have the most alignment to the council's requirements is the operator management fee arrangement, whereby the council would keep control of the building and enter into a contract with a suitably experienced operator who would deliver the services in the hub and be managed by the council on the basis of the KPIs set and agreed at the outset. Furthermore, the soft market testing exercise received three submissions, all experienced operators of innovation hubs. All expressed an interest in the proposition, including the location of Watford itself and the Town Hall, and all believed that they could operate a profitable operation for both themselves and the council in this context.

8.4 Financial Case

Financially the proposed future usage of the Town Hall is expected to deliver a saving of £140,000 per annum (averaged across an eight year period). This arises from new staffing to support the longer opening hours of the museum and new bespoke off-site storage for the museum collections which total a revenue growth of £100,000 per year. It also expected that the Innovation and Incubation Hub will deliver an income to the council of approximately £100,000 per year. To enable the future usage of the buildings the council's office accommodation footprint needs to reduce significantly. As a consequence of this, the cost of the space that is used by both staff and members will reduce by approximately £300,000.

The anticipated cost of the works stand at £11.55m and cover not just the much needed refurbishment of the main Town Hall building, but also the fit out for the Museum towards the front of the building, currently housing the Committee Rooms on the first floor and the IT server room and part of the current Colosseum space on the ground floor towards the front of the building, the fit out of the Innovation and Incubation hub, the demolition of the semi-permanent building known as the Terrapin adjacent to Peace Prospect and the refurbishment of the Annexe, situated towards the rear of the main Town Hall building. £8.9M is currently available within the capital programme, therefore, the affordability of the proposals is dependent upon the New Neighbourhoods Project for the Town Hall Quarter being brought to fruition. In addition, further capital receipts will need to be generated from the rationalisation of other council-held property. Appendix 3 shows the breakdown of the funding for the programme and assurances from the project advisers in respect of the New Neighbourhood project.

8.5 Management Case

It is expected that the Town Hall refurbishment will be completed in May 2024 allowing the council staff to move back in from their temporary accommodation on the top two floors of the Annexe. The Innovation and Incubation Hub and Museum fit out work would then commence with the Hub opening in summer 2024 and the Museum ready to open in May 2025.

The project will be managed via a dedicated Project Board reporting into the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board, chaired by the Managing Director. This will allow risks, issues and any potential changes to be actively managed and, where necessary, escalated with a full understanding of any implications. Political oversight will be maintained by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor and in place since the initiation of the programme, which will continue to allow ongoing progress reporting and feedback from Members.

9.0 Implementation Plan

9.1 A full copy of the implementation plan can be found at section 6.7 in both Appendices 1 and 2. However, a summary is included below:

Timeline	Activity
November 2022	Decarbonisation works commence in the Town Hall and Colosseum
March 2022	Decarbonisation works complete in the Town Hall and Colosseum
May 2022	Annexe refurbishment complete and council staff locate to interim space
June 2022	Colosseum operator procurement complete
October 2022	Colosseum detailed designs complete
November 2022	Colosseum refurbishment commences
April 2023	Town Hall detailed designs complete and refurbishment commences
July 2023	Innovation and Incubation Hub operator procurement complete
September 2023	Museum design complete
Autumn 2023	Colosseum reopens
Spring 2024	Town Hall refurbishment complete and council staff return to reduced footprint in the main Town Hall building
Spring 2024	Innovation Hub fit out complete and Hub opens
Spring 2024	Museum fit out commences
Spring 2025	Museum reopens in heritage rooms and the front ground floor rooms of the Town Hall

10.0 Implications

10.1 Financial

10.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that £8.9m is currently available within the capital programme, therefore, the affordability of the proposals is dependent upon the New Neighbourhoods Project for the Town Hall Quarter being brought to fruition. In addition, the programme will be supported by land receipts and savings in ongoing revenue costs. The table at 10.1.3 shows the breakdown of the funding for the programme. This shows that there remains a gap of £1.775m to be funded through borrowing which will incur interest and MRP charges. It should be noted that, in order to deliver the overall programme, work on the Colosseum and Town Hall will start before the delivery of the regeneration scheme and capital receipts. As a result temporary borrowing will be required to allow the schemes to progress.

10.1.2 The forecast revenue position is a positive one of £142,000 after taking into account ongoing interest and MRP charges.

10.1.3

Capital £M	Current
Colosseum	12.390
Town Hall and Annex Refurbishment	9.550
Innovation Hub fit-out	0.250
Museum fit-out	1.750
Project Costs	0.880
Total Cost	24.820
Existing Capital Budget	-8.900
Benskin House Capital Receipt	-0.500
Gap - Required from Development	15.420
Capital Receipts - LHSIM (non/low income generating)	-4.240
Capital Receipts - Surplus Sites	-3.105
Projected Contribution from Development	-6.300
Revised Gap	1.775
Revenue £M	
Colosseum	0.000
Town Hall and Annex Buildings	0.340
Innovation Hub	-0.130
Museum	0.220
Total	0.430
Existing Revenue Budget	-0.700
Revenue Gap	-0.270
Loss of Rental Income	0.033
Capital Financing Charges	0.095
Total Revenue Gap	-0.142

10.1.4 Final budgets, including a full resourcing plan, will be agreed as part of the 2022/23 Budget determination.

10.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

10.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the funding for these projects will need to be approved as part of the budget setting process by Council in January 2022. All procurements will be undertaken in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules and Public Contract Regulations. Cabinet set up a Member Steering Group to provide oversight of the programme. This steering group has been kept regularly apprised of progress and will continue to have oversight as the programme progresses. Regular formal updates on the progress of the programme will also be provided to Cabinet.

10.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

10.3.1 Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

In order to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the council's commitment to equality and diversity, equalities impact analysis for both the Colosseum and the Town Hall have been undertaken. The analyses, for the Colosseum Refurbishment and the Town Hall Refurbishment is attached as Appendices 1C (Colosseum Refurbishment) and 2D (Town Hall Refurbishment) to this report.

10.3.2 Colosseum Refurbishment Equality Impact Analysis

The main conclusions of that analysis are that the refurbishment of the Colosseum will bring about a number of positive impacts. It will ensure that the building remains inclusive and accessible and provides wider sectors of the community, including those with protected characteristics, with access to culture and the arts. No negative impacts which cannot be mitigated have been identified in relation to the refurbishment of the building but a number of recommendations have been made which will ensure that a commitment to equalities remains at the heart of the refurbishment.

The full Equality Impact Analysis is attached as Appendix 1C.

10.3.3 Town Hall Refurbishment Equality Impact Analysis

The Equality Impact Analysis identified a number of positive impacts from the Town Hall refurbishment proposals, recognising the opportunities to open up the Town Hall to the community, taking into account how the needs of those with protected characteristics can be incorporated into future designs and planning. Similarly, the needs of staff and members can be assimilated into the planning for the Town Hall, blending with the needs of the community to deliver a building that is welcoming, accessible and inclusive.

The full Equality Impact Analysis is attached as Appendix 2D.

10.3.4 Data Processing Impact Assessment

Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

10.4 Staffing

10.4.1 There is no impact on the existing establishment as a result of these plans. It is assumed that the Innovation Hub and Colosseum operator contracts will be managed by existing resource. However, the projects themselves will need to be adequately resourced to ensure that they are delivered. In line with the council's approach to programme and project management across the organisation, a flexible resourcing model is proposed. Given that the need for project management is expected to change as the programme progresses, this approach will allow resource to flex in line with the programme implementation plan. This will also ensure that costs associated with resourcing are similarly proactively managed with any resource not required at redeployed to other programmes and/or projects within the council, representing a saving to the programme and keeping costs to a minimum where possible. The Programme Board and Member Steering Group will maintain an overview of the resourcing model.

10.5 Accommodation

10.5.1 The retention of agile working for staff will significantly reduce the council's floor space. Having worked closely with our Staff Ambassadors Group and elected members and conducted a series of surveys with council staff, it is clear that the extensive space currently available in the Town Hall is no longer required. Furthermore, as staff continue to work from home, there is a need for the council offices to reflect the need for collaborative space rather than multiple desks in segregated offices. In line with the commitment contained within the Council Plan 2020-24, the programme will therefore introduce modern and fit for purpose offices which will ensure that the council can continue to deliver high quality services for residents.

10.5.2 Whilst the Town Hall decarbonisation works are undertaken between November 2021 and spring 2022, limited space will be available for council staff at the Town Hall, although the face to face customer service centre will be retained. The council chamber will also be available for use for democratic meetings and meeting space will be available for members on the ground floor. Council staff will instead have access to existing office space as Wiggshall Depot, Cassiobury Hub, Cheslyn House, Woodside Sports Centre and Watford Community Housing.

10.5.3 During this period, the Annexe, situated towards the rear of the Town Hall, will be refurbished to be initially used by council staff and members between spring 2022

and spring 2024 as the main Town Hall refurbishment takes place. From spring 2024, the council staff and members will move back into a much reduced footprint within the main Town Hall building, with the space reflecting the requirements introduced as a result of agile working. It is this new way of working and associated reduction in floor space which allows the relocation of the museum and implementation of the Innovation and Incubation Hub in the Town Hall.

10.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

10.6.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the council to give due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its functions on crime and disorder in its area and to do all it reasonably can to prevent these. Consequently, the implications of the programme and its constituent projects on crime and disorder have been considered but no impact either positive or negative has been identified.

10.7 Sustainability

10.7.1 In July 2019, Watford Borough Council declared a climate emergency and made a commitment to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030. As such, sustainability is woven into the fabric of the Town Hall Quarter programme and, in particular, the refurbishment of both the Town Hall and Colosseum delivering on the vision to 'champion a greener, more sustainable Watford'.

10.7.2 The refurbishment of both heritage buildings will introduce enhanced utility efficiency contributing to the council's sustainability target and reducing electricity, gas and water consumption as well as the overall carbon footprint of the building.

10.7.3 To achieve this, the council has been successfully awarded £3.7m from the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to decarbonise the Town Hall and Colosseum buildings. This work, scheduled between November 2021 and March 2022, includes the refurbishment of windows, heating control and lighting improvements, cavity wall and roof insulation enhancements and the introduction of photovoltaic panels and storage.

10.7.4 Furthermore, the plans for ongoing agile working for staff is expected to reduce footfall within the town and reduce the carbon footprint of staff who will be making less journeys to the physical Town Hall and contributing towards less congestion on our roads, in line with our draft Sustainable Transport Strategy.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Colosseum Business Case
- Appendix 2 – Town Hall Refurbishment Business Case

Background papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

- Town Hall Quarter Cabinet Report dated 18 January 2021
- Town Hall RIBA Stage 1 report



Colosseum Refurbishment Outline Business Case

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1. Executive Summary

The Colosseum is an entertainment venue situated adjacent to the Town Hall in Watford town centre. The refurbishment of the building is an integral part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, a ten year comprehensive programme of activity which serves to deliver a vision of *'a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, creating exciting new opportunities for our residents, businesses and community, contributing to Watford's prosperity and success'*.

The Colosseum, which was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, has previously been managed by an Operator whose contract was terminated by mutual agreement in December 2020. The cessation of the operator contract provides an ideal opportunity to undertake much needed refurbishment and reconfiguration work to the building whilst causing the minimum disruption possible. The programme of work expects the building to reopen with a new operator in autumn 2023. This business case is concerned with and recommends the full refurbishment of the Colosseum building.

Refurbishment of the building will significantly reduce the risk of building failure, provide an opportunity to replace end-of-life equipment and facilitate a more beneficial commercial arrangement with a future operator, seeking to pass the building and maintenance liability to the operator and potentially negating the need for an operator management fee. The project will considerably extend the lifetime of the building whilst ensuring it is energy efficient, meets modern requirements in terms of accessibility and compliance and importantly respects the building's heritage and history.

Whilst a number of options, including do nothing, do minimum and a building only refurbishment, were considered, the only option which allows the council to deliver on each of the project objectives is to proceed with the delivery of a comprehensive refurbishment of the building systems, fabric and plant to replace end-of-life equipment, address backlog maintenance issues and bring the building up to modern standards. The recommended option would also see the delivery of a programme of enhancements to the building, addressing issues that currently negatively impact on the buildings commercial operation. The full scope of the proposals is contained within the RIBA Stage 2 report and is estimated to cost in the region of £12,390,000; being £11,350,000 for essential works and £1,040,000 for building enhancements.

Aside from the benefits to the actual building, the refurbishment will deliver a wider economic contribution to the town by bringing more people into the town centre, with public engagement to date confirming that visitors to the Colosseum would combine their visit with a meal, drink or shopping trip. In addition to volunteering opportunities, it would also provide additional opportunities for 25 full time and 70 casual staff and provide additional opportunities for Watford residents to access and participate in arts and culture. Furthermore, the council is keen to support and provide space for other community groups in the town and reconfiguration of the space should help to ensure that the space is not under-utilised, particularly in the day.

The financial benefits arising from the Colosseum refurbishment project are all dependent on the outcome of the new operator procurement and the council's assumptions regarding the contract that will be secured through this project. The aspirations from this process are that the Colosseum will become cost neutral for the council through having no management fee to the operator, which it is hoped over the life of the contract will become a positive payment to the council, and no retained building risk or liability. If these outcomes are secured from the new operator contract the council will save the existing budget of approximately £165,000.

Two procurement processes will be undertaken in order to deliver the project. The first of these, commencing in March 2022, will be for a two stage Design and Build contract for the delivery of the refurbishment, which takes into account the council's objectives, risk appetite and wider constraints and dependencies. This route offers the best prospect of programme adherence and transfers

programme, cost and residual design risk to the contractor. This route also would enable synergies to be explored with the Town Hall refurbishment (see Appendix 2), which would provide time and cost efficiencies to the council. The second procurement relates to securing an operator for which a Competitive Procedure with Negotiation procurement route will be followed to enable the council to discuss a number of different solutions and variations throughout the process to ensure the best outcome is achieved, including input to the final building design development process from operators. Whilst the council is keen to secure a commercial deal, this is likely to be reflected in the length of the lease which could be up to 25 years and any community use of the space will similarly be subject to these negotiations. Soft market testing to date has indicated that three well-established operators are likely to bid for the contract whilst public engagement has shown that there is a strong public desire for the Colosseum to reopen and provide a range of diverse and varied events, activities and performances.

The project will be managed via a designated Project Board reporting into the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board, chaired by the Managing Director. This will allow risks, issues and any potential changes to be actively managed and, where necessary, escalated with a full understanding of any implications. Political oversight will be maintained by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor and in place since the initiation of the programme, which will continue to allow ongoing progress reporting and feedback from Members.

For the reasons outlined above, the refurbishment of the Colosseum as detailed in Appendix 1B, is recommended to Cabinet for approval.

2. Strategic Case

2.1 Background

The Colosseum is an entertainment venue situated immediately adjacent to the Town Hall. The council owns the building and historically contracted experienced operators to manage the programme of events, performances and activities which take place within it. The contract with the previous operator, due to come to an end in March 2021, was terminated by mutual agreement in December 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions on opening the building. Refurbishment of the building, including the replacement of end-of-life machinery, is overdue and this period without an operator, in addition to £3.7m of funding from Central Government to decarbonise the Town Hall and Colosseum, has provided an ideal opportunity to proceed with the refurbishment.

This business case is therefore for the refurbishment of the Colosseum to secure its long-term future and increase its viability as a nationally-renowned visitor attraction. Not only will refurbishment of the building improve the venue for visitors and, potentially, community groups, it will also provide a better commercial deal for the council from the new operator contract including transfer of building repair and maintenance responsibility to the new operator. Market testing has indicated that no operator would take on the risk of refurbishing the building and so it is incumbent on the council to undertake these works in order to realise the benefits outlined within this document, including the wider benefits for the town, bringing more people into our vibrant town centre.

2.2 Context for change

Up until December 2020, the Colosseum was managed via a contract by HQ Theatres with the council paying a management fee of £165,000 per annum and also retaining responsibility for some aspects of the building repairs and maintenance. However, performances and events at the Colosseum stopped in March 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown and associated government guidance. Theatres were only permitted to reopen, with social distancing measures, in May 2021 with full capacity not permitted until two months later. As a result of the restrictions in place, and with the existing contract due to end in March 2021, the council and HQ Theatres took the mutual decision to terminate the contract in December 2020.

Surveys of the Colosseum have indicated the need for significant refurbishment to ensure that the venue can continue to operate in the long-term. In November 2019, the Colosseum was closed at short notice for a period of four weeks to undertake essential repairs to the ceiling in the auditorium. This caused disruption to the programme of events and activities within the building at a busy time of the year and specialist advice has indicated that further episodes of unscheduled building closures are likely should refurbishment of the building not be undertaken. In addition, some essential equipment has been identified as end-of-life and will need replacing should the building continue to operate. The refurbishment provides an opportunity to reconfigure some areas of the building to ensure that some of the issues identified in terms of the use of the building, such as visitor flow and access to food and beverage are improved, further increasing the attractiveness of the venue to a commercial operator. In parallel to this, the council has been awarded £3.7m from the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to decarbonise the Town Hall and Colosseum buildings which includes the refurbishment of windows, heating control and lighting improvements, cavity wall and roof insulation enhancements and the introduction of photovoltaic panels and storage. This will allow the Colosseum to contribute to the council's sustainability ambitions and target of reaching net carbon neutral by 2030.

The gap between operator contracts provides an ideal opportunity to undertake the decarbonisation, refurbishment and reconfiguration work whilst causing the minimum disruption possible. This work will form part of the wider Town Hall Quarter programme.

2.3 Current issues, priorities and implications of not undertaking the project

- Significant parts of the machinery required to run the Colosseum building are or near to end-of-life. To continue to keep the Colosseum operational, these would need to be replaced. If this did not happen, the inherent risk in the building (which could lead to a significant failure resulting in a period of closure to undertake repairs) could also mean that the opportunity would not be attractive to the market and it is likely that the council would not be able to secure an operator.
- Even if an operator could be secured, it is unlikely that the council would be able to secure a beneficial commercial deal meaning that it would continue to be liable for an annual management fee as well as repair and maintenance liabilities, which will increase and therefore would provide a budget pressure.
- Without the repurposing of the space, the Colosseum would continue to be underutilised, particularly in the day time. Any potential opportunities to fill the space and support cultural organisations would be lost.
- The opportunity to link in the Colosseum with the wider Town Hall Quarter programme, including re-establishing the link between the Colosseum and the Town Hall (which will house the new Museum) would be lost. The ambition to create a new hub for the arts and culture in the town would subsequently not be realised.

2.4 Project objectives

- Implement refurbishments to provide the Colosseum building with a 35-40 year life expectancy.
- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Colosseum building meets the requirements of commercial operators and allows the successful procurement of an operator passing over building repair and maintenance liability.
- Refurbish the building to enable an operator to deliver a wider offer and greater revenue streams.
- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Colosseum building provides an opportunity for opening up the space for the community.
- Ensure the requirements for the Colosseum building meets modern standards, including in relation to accessibility and compliance.
- Ensure that the building is energy efficient and has integrated sustainability features.
- Ensure that the Colosseum provides value for money in terms of ongoing operating and maintenance costs.
- To interlink and enable join up the use of the Town Hall and Colosseum buildings.
- Ensure that the refurbishment is in keeping with the heritage of the building.

2.5 Dependencies

Work to date has identified the following dependencies which will require management throughout the next phase of the programme:

- The commencement of the Colosseum refurbishment is dependent on the approval of the RIBA Stage 3 plans in June 2022.
- The commencement of the Colosseum refurbishment is dependent on the successful and timely completion of the decarbonisation works on the building, expected to be completed by March 2022.
- The ability to procure an operator with an attractive commercial arrangement, is dependent on the successful completion of the Colosseum refurbishment works.
- The re-opening of the Colosseum in Autumn 2023 will be dependent on the successful procurement of an operator and completion of works by this point.
- The ability to re-establish the link between the Town Hall and Colosseum will be dependent on the progression of the associated works in the Town Hall building.
- Parking for users of the Colosseum is dependent on the total number of spaces allocated within the New Neighbourhood which will be subject to the final proposals from joint venture partners.

2.6 Constraints

Work to date has identified the following constraints which will require management throughout the next phase of the programme:

- As a result of its listed status the Colosseum refurbishment must be acceptable to Historic England.
- In order to maximise the use of space within the Town Hall Quarter, meet the objectives of the programme and deliver the sustainability ambitions for the council there will be a significant reduction in parking across the Town Hall Quarter, which will impact existing Colosseum parking in the Town Hall Car Park. The optimum parking provision and solution will be developed through the next phase of the programme in line with the revised requirements of all stakeholders.
- Soft market feedback has indicated that autumn is a key period for theatre operators. As a result, there will be a need to ensure that the refurbishment has been completed by autumn 2023 to ensure that the benefit of this period can be maximised.
- The scale of the refurbishment will be constrained by the budget. However, the budget presented is anticipated to be sufficient to deliver the RIBA Stage 2 works as outlined in Appendix 1B.

3. Economic case

3.1 Possible options

In developing the proposals for the refurbishment of the Colosseum a number of options have been considered. All options have been assessed in the context of a new commercial operator of the Colosseum and the likely implications of the chosen option on the deal that the council is able to secure. Within this, consideration has been given to the ongoing risk, liability and financial implications for the council over the life of that contract.

Option	Description	Potential Implications
1. Do nothing	No refurbishment works would be completed. The venue would attempt to continue to operate as it has previously with the aging plant and building management systems and other inherent flaws in the building currently, which mean it is not fit-for-purpose as a modern theatre venue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the current state of the building it is anticipated that the opportunity would not be attractive to the market and it will not be possible to secure an operator. <p>However, in the event that an operator contractor <i>is</i> secured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building repair and maintenance liability would likely remain with the council requiring an estimated budget of approximately £190,000 per annum (which is not within the current budget) • There would remain the risk of a building defect which would result in a period of closure (such as in late 2019) with liability within the contract for such failures likely to remain with the council • There would also be high risk of a <i>significant</i> failure within the building resulting in an extended period of closure to complete a full refurbishment with the associated financial implications for the council and on the operator and operator contract • Commerciality of the building would not be enhanced with the management fee therefore expected to be retained (approx. £165,000 per annum cost)



Option	Description	Potential Implications
2. Do minimum	<p>This option would involve completing an extensive maintenance programme on the existing plant, building management systems and fabric, but would not replace any of these items. Through this it would be hoped that up to ten years further life can be stretched from such equipment. This option would not address the inherent flaws in the building currently, which mean it is not fit-for-purpose as a modern theatre venue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance programme estimated to cost in the region of £4m • Given that this would not fundamentally impact the operation of the building and plant etc, which would still be basically end-of-life, the inherent risk in the building could mean that the opportunity would not be attractive to the market and it will not be possible to secure an operator. <p>In the event that an operator contractor <i>is</i> secured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building repair and maintenance liability would likely remain with the council requiring an estimated budget of approximately £80,000 per annum (which is not within the current budget) • There would remain the risk of a building defect which would result in a period of closure (such as in late 2019) with liability within the contract for such failures likely to remain with the council • There would also be a high risk of a <i>significant</i> failure within the building resulting in an extended period of closure to complete a full refurbishment with the associated financial implications for the council and on the operator and operator contract • Commerciality of the building would not be enhanced and therefore the management fee would expected to be retained (approx. £165,000 per annum cost)

Option	Description	Potential Implications
3. Building only refurbishment	<p>Delivery of a comprehensive refurbishment of the building systems, fabric, plant etc to replace end-of-life equipment, address backlog maintenance issues and bring the building up to modern standards.</p> <p>This option includes all of the areas identified as “essential” within the RIBA Stage 2 report at Appendix 1B.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme estimated to cost in the region of £11,350,000 • Opportunity would be expected to be attractive to the market due to the works that have been completed in the building and therefore it is likely that the council will successfully secure a new operator. • Building repair and maintenance liability would be expected to transfer to the new operator, as per the council’s specification for the contract¹ • Low risk of a failure within the building with the expectations that liability within the contract for such failures will transfer to the operator¹ • Commerciality of the building not enhanced therefore management fee expected to be retained (approx. £165,000 per annum cost)¹
4. Full commercial refurbishment	<p>Delivery of a comprehensive refurbishment of the building systems, fabric, plant etc to replace end-of-life equipment, address backlog maintenance issues and bring the building up to modern standards.</p> <p>Delivery of a programme of enhancements to the building addressing issues that currently negatively impact on the building’s commercial operation.</p> <p>This option includes the delivery of the full scope of the proposals within the RIBA Stage 2 report at Appendix 1B.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme estimated to cost in the region of £12,390,000. £11,350,000 for essential works and £1,040,000 for building enhancements • Opportunity would be expected to be attractive to the market due to the works that have been completed in the building and therefore it is likely that the council will successfully secure a new operator • Building repair and maintenance liability would be expected to transfer to the new operator, as per the council’s specification for the contract¹ • Low risk of a failure within the building with the expectations that liability within the contract for such failures will transfer to the operator¹ • Commerciality of the building enhanced therefore no management fee expected to be required, with the potential for income to come to the council from the contract delivering a saving of approximately £165,000 per annum¹

¹ This is currently an assumption based on market insight, but cannot be definitively confirmed until the new operator procurement is complete and a contract is signed.

From the description of the options and the potential implications of each, options 1 and 2 are not viable if the council is to deliver its objective of the Colosseum being a sustainable building that successfully supports a high quality cultural venue for Watford. Both of these options would not address the fundamental issues within the building and would therefore require an extensive refurbishment (as described in other options) at some point in the not too distant future. Additionally these options may well mean the building is unattractive to the market and therefore mean that the council may not be successful in securing an operator, or that if a contract is secured significant responsibility for the building, with the associated and unbudgeted cost, would remain with the council, as well as significant liabilities if elements of the building were to fail. Therefore it is recommended that either options 3 or 4, both of which entail an extensive refurbishment should be selected.

The choice between options 3 and 4 is inherently linked to the benefit of the approximately £1m spend on building enhancements that will positively impact on the operation of the building for a future operator. This option is expected to deliver, across the life of the contract, a zero, or ideally positive, management fee, which would result in an annual saving of approximately £165,000, which over the life of a 15 year operator contract would pay back this additional investment nearly three times over. Additionally these enhancements will improve the audience experience within the venue and therefore would be expected to enhance the delivery of all of the non-financial benefits of a successful Colosseum operation.

Following consideration of the enhanced benefits case associated with the delivery of the building enhancements, option 4, the full commercial refurbishment of the Colosseum is the recommended option.

3.2 Project benefits

The delivery of the full commercial refurbishment of the Colosseum at a cost of £12,390,000 will, subject to the successful procurement of a new operator, enable the Colosseum to once again be a thriving cultural venue from the autumn of 2023 for at least the next 20 years before further works are required. The refurbishment of the Colosseum is an enabler of these benefits, as it provides a facility from which the new operator can operate and these benefits are therefore contingent on the procurement of a new operator. These benefits are the fundamental component of the Colosseum Refurbishment business case, as without the refurbishment these benefits cannot be realised and the value of the Colosseum to Watford would be lost.

The benefits case has been split into three broad categories:

1. Non-financial – benefits to the town and community from the Colosseum as a thriving cultural venue
2. Financial – quantifiable benefits to the council's financial position
3. Building – benefits associated with the protection and enhancement of the heritage building, including sustainability enhancements

3.2.1 Non-financial benefits

As noted above, the Colosseum is a key component of the life of Watford and a successful and vibrant Colosseum is dependent on the refurbishment of the building. The refurbishment and future operation of the building is therefore expected to contribute the following non-financial benefits to Watford.

- Economic contribution – the Colosseum attracts visitors and their associated spend into the Town Centre. Research from 2018/19 following the Arts Council England methodology found that the economic contribution of the Colosseum was more than £1.8m.²
- Employment opportunities – the Colosseum provides employment opportunities for 25 full-time and 70 casual staff, many of whom are in groups which have been particularly impacted by the pandemic
- Value of arts and culture – there is much research into the value of arts and culture to both individual’s and society. As a cultural venue in Watford, with a different offer to the other cultural venues, the Colosseum contributes to the delivery of this value to the residents of Watford and the surrounding areas. Opportunities to access and participate in arts and culture are recognised to have a positive impact on people’s health and well-being, contribute to community cohesion and making communities feel safer and stronger, reduce social exclusion and isolation and much more.³
- Volunteering opportunities – the Colosseum offers opportunities for volunteers in the community, which has been shown to have a well-being and social integration benefit.⁴

3.2.2 Financial benefits

The financial benefits arising from the Colosseum refurbishment project are all dependent on the outcome of the new operator procurement and the council’s assumptions regarding the contract that will be secured through this project. The aspirations from this process are that the Colosseum will become cost neutral for the council:

1. No management fee to the operator, which is hoped will become positive i.e. the operator will ultimately pay the council and income / profit share
2. No retained building risk or liability i.e. the new operator will agree a full repairing and insuring lease

If these outcomes are secured from the new operator contract the council will save the existing budget of approximately £165,000. Although the council currently has responsibility for the external repairs and maintenance of the building there is no dedicated budget for these works, which when required have been paid for from a general reactive repairs budget that is used across the council’s estate, as such the transfer of building risk will not enable a financial saving to be delivered.

3.2.3 Building benefits

The refurbishment will deliver the following benefits to the Colosseum building:

Benefit description	Measures
Building brought up to modern standards and end-of-life systems replaced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced ongoing repairs and maintenance costs • Reduction in audience complaints about building factors such as temperature • Building meets all required building standards (statutory compliance etc)
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building assessed as accessible in accordance with DDA standards

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rapid-evidence-assessment-culture-and-heritage-valuation-studies>

³ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/exploring-value-arts-and-culture/value-arts-and-culture-people-and-society#>

⁴ https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/research/values_and_benefits_of_heritage_2015.pdf

Benefit description	Measures
Enhanced utility efficiency (contributing to the council's net zero carbon sustainability target ⁵)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced electricity consumption • Reduced gas consumption • Reduced water consumption • Reduced carbon footprint of the building
Preserved heritage asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage asset is maintained in accordance with the council's legal obligations
Enhanced customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased satisfaction from customers • Reduction in audience complaints about building factors such as temperature • Increased ability to attract a wider range of diverse performers

3.3 Key Assumptions

As stated above, the identified financial benefits will arise from the new Colosseum operator contract, but are enabled by the refurbishment project. There are four key areas in which assumptions have been made that need to be considered, where the deal struck may not meet the council's aspirations.

1. Building risk transfer where the council is not able to secure a full repairing and insuring lease. In this situation some responsibility, such as external repairs and maintenance with the consequent budget requirement, would stay with the council.
2. A Management Fee, where the council has to pay the operator may be required and the required management fee / income may not be flat i.e. a management fee may be required in the early years of the contract as the operator becomes established
3. The length of the lease - for the council to secure a commercial deal, a more lengthy lease may need to be considered
4. The community use in the day will be subject to the final deal with an operator and there may be a trade off with the commerciality of any deal secured given the impact on the operator of facilitating community daytime use.

In all cases the council's aspirations for both the financial and non-financial benefits delivered may be reduced; however given the improvements made to the building and the changed market since the previous contract was procured it is expected that the existing £165,000 budget would be sufficient to cover the council's ongoing financial requirements for the Colosseum building and operation.

⁵ Benefit enabled by both the Colosseum Refurbishment and PSDS projects

4. Commercial case

4.1 Refurbishment

To deliver the Colosseum Refurbishment the council have a contract with Mace Consult Limited to provide Lead Consultant, Multi-Disciplinary Design and Project Management services. They have been working with Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios who are providing Architectural Services for the Colosseum Refurbishment project. The consultant team, along with Watford Borough Council officers have worked through to the development of RIBA Stage 2 designs and are currently working on RIBA Stage 3 designs.

They have completed work to develop a procurement and delivery route for the refurbishment, which takes into account the council's objectives, risk appetite and wider constraints and dependencies. This recommends that the council follows a two-stage Design and Build route for the delivery of the refurbishment as this better satisfies the council's criteria than a traditional route. This route offers the best prospect of programme adherence and transfers programme, cost and design risk to the contractor. This route would also enable synergies to be explored with the Town Hall refurbishment works (see Appendix 2), which would provide time and cost efficiencies to the council.

The detailed procurement strategy and approach has not yet been developed; however it is anticipated that the council will competitively tender the contract from an established framework to which the council has access. This approach de-risks the process as the framework has already established terms and conditions and competitively tendered rates and has an agreed set of available companies who are capable and likely to submit bids. The approach can also be completed faster than an open / restricted process.

4.2 New Operator

4.2.1 Market Overview

The market for operating theatres on behalf of local authorities can be considered to be split into three types of operators as summarised below:

- **Theatre Operators**, such as HQ Theatres, Selladoor, Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG), who all specifically focus on theatres and operate venues. Many of these either partner or have separate production arms and some have Not for Profit Subsidiaries.
- **Theatre Trusts**, where local trusts (as is the case with the Palace Theatre) operate single venues but also may be seeking to expand.
- **Leisure & Cultural Operators**, for example BH Live, Parkwood Theatres, GLL and SLM (the council's leisure operators) who operate theatres as part of their wider portfolio and can bring added value. Within this group organisations such as BH Live and Parkwood Theatres have developed specific groups to deliver this aspect but other organisations tend to operate as part of their portfolio.

The market for theatre operators is limited as illustrated above and this has been reinforced through the market engagement process the council undertook in 2019, with only two organisations providing feedback through the questionnaire. This does not however mean that these will be the only bidders, as it is not uncommon for operators to only register their interest once the procurement process has been launched.

The market is currently in a position where venues are starting to open up following Covid-19 and, whilst it is still early in the recovery phase, many operators are positive about the longer term, with there being both:

- Content that hasn't been delivered for circa 18 – 24 months meaning that there is likely to be a significant amount of content to be placed in venues over the coming years
- Built up customer demand from event goers who have been deprived of their events and shows over the last 18 – 24 months

Research has suggested that whilst the theatre market is challenging at present, in the longer term audiences could return to higher than pre-covid levels, with more focus on local attendance and a greater appreciation of digital content or enhancement.

Given the anticipated timescale of the Colosseum refurbishment, the above would suggest that the Colosseum is ideally placed to maximise on the pent up demand and benefit from the long term approach.

4.2.2 Operator Engagement

As part of the development of the procurement strategy for the future operation of the Colosseum further operator engagement was undertaken in July 2021. The opportunity was sent to the operators to seek updated feedback on a number of areas, including:

- Has the level of interest changed in the market from the previous procurement?
- Does the proposed design still meet the market requirements and deliver on the council's outcomes?
- Is the council's ambition of seeking to get to a break even position and a full repairing and renewal risk transfer for the Colosseum reasonable?
- Has Covid impacted on the market at all?

Three well-established operators expressed a positive interest in the Colosseum opportunity and the council could expect these three operators to submit bids, which is in line with the previous procurement and in line with market expectations.

The feedback from the operators suggest that the procurement strategy the council is undertaking and the outcomes that are being sought have the potential to be achieved, with the engagement feedback indicating:

- The design and investment is likely to deliver significant improvement on the commercial return, however it should be recognised that the Colosseum will have been closed for over two years by the time it reopens and it can be considered to be a new venue launch, with the commercial position of at least breakeven potentially taking time to be achieved. This may mean that the Colosseum will require revenue support from the council in the first few years
- The potential for operators to take on full repair and renewal risk will depend on the detailed analysis of the investment, but the principle of taking on this risk is understood by the operators, assuming that the refurbishment investment deals with all the major issues as outlined in the RIBA stage 2 report in Appendix 1B.
- All respondees confirmed that they are in a position where their anticipated Covid recovery suggests that they will be back to operating as normal by the re-opening of the Colosseum, assuming no further lockdowns or restrictions. The impact on the market is likely in the early years to be positive with customers returning and content being available following effectively two years without content.
- A contract length of up to 25 years is likely to be necessary to drive the benefits outlined above.

Those operators that responded were positive about the future opportunity and welcomed the procurement strategy of using negotiation to ensure that the council's outcomes could be delivered. At this stage of the process the principles were understood, but recognising that the detailed development of bids would take place during the procurement and the negotiation approach.

Ultimately, the engagement with the operators has suggested that the council outcomes of achieving a better commercial position and also transferring full life cycle risk are achievable subject to the scale of the refurbishment programme.

4.2.3 Market Demand

Whilst the soft market testing has indicated that there will be interest on the supply side in relation to the Colosseum operator, the council has also consulted with residents and visitors of the town. The Colosseum survey, circulated over the council's social media channels in May 2021, provided the council with a wealth of knowledge and feedback:

- Out of 145 respondents, 99 stated that they would combine their visit to the Colosseum with a visit to shops, a restaurant or bar / restaurant.
- 77.49% of respondents said they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to combine a trip to the Colosseum with a visit to a pub or bar.
- 57.73% of respondents said they would be more likely to recommend Watford as a place to live / visit / work when the Colosseum re-opens
- A fuller more diverse programme of events would increase use in the Colosseum and attract a wider range of visitors
- The Colosseum should promote events which are attractive to young people who live in the area and want to engage

Ultimately, the public engagement has indicated that there is demand for a diverse programme of activities and event at the Colosseum which will bring a wider benefits to the town and, in particular, the High Street.

4.3 Procurement Strategy Overview

The following key principles are the basis of the procurement strategy:

- Contract Length would be 15 years, with the potential to discuss variant bids up to 25 years
- There are a number of key outcomes which will need to be reflected in the specification and the bidders' response, including
 - Bidders will be expected to provide an outcomes delivery plan on how they will improve the customer experience, increase attendance and ticket levels and ensure innovation
 - The specification will be developed to reflect best practice in the industry
 - Bidders should outline how they will deliver greater daytime use
 - There is an expectation that the future operator will deliver a community and education programme
 - A revised concessionary pricing policy will be developed for the contractor to follow
- Key contract terms to be incorporated in the contract would include:

-
- Operator to take a Full, Repairing and Insuring Lease on the building meaning that all of the risk and cost of the building will be borne by the operator
 - An income share arrangement is preferred to a profit share agreement
 - The council may be willing to consider revenue support in the early years of the contract, but this will need to no longer be required once the Colosseum is re-established. The council will expect a positive income share once the Colosseum is re-established.

The council will follow the Competitive Procedure with Negotiation procurement route to enable the council to discuss a number of different solutions and variations through the process, ensuring that the best outcome is achieved, including securing input to the design development process from operators. It is the council's intention to complete the procurement process and award a contract to the preferred bidder by autumn 2022.

The procurement strategy the council have adopted is the best approach to maximising and delivering the outcomes, through allowing dialogue and input into the design process to ensure the future operation reflects the delivery of a successful programme and focus on full transfer of risk.

5. Financial Case

5.1 Expenditure and Costing Profile

5.1.1 Revenue case

The council's expectation is that through the refurbishment of the Colosseum, both the core building and building enhancements to support its commerciality, a contract with a new operator will on average cost the council nothing across the life of the contract and that the new operator will take on the full building risk for the life of the contract. As such the revenue case is very simple with the expectation that there will be £0 required to support the ongoing operation of the colosseum as a cultural venue in Watford. This case is however reliant on the assumptions made being valid and dependent on the outcome of the new operator procurement. The key assumptions are discussed in section **Error! Reference source not found.** with a detailed list of assumptions in Appendix 1A.

5.1.2 Capital expenditure

The total budget for the refurbishment of the Colosseum is £12.4m. The breakdown of this between the core building refurbishment and the commercial enhancements is shown in the table below.

Item	Cost / £k
Core building refurbishment	11,350
Building enhancements	1,040
Total	12,390

These costs, which are exclusive of VAT, include a 15% allowance for statutory fees, professional fees and surveys and approximately 7.5% contingency allowance. A detailed cost model with details of the assumptions made can be found in Appendix 1B.

5.2 Funding and Affordability

The delivery of the project will be funded from a range of sources comprising:

- Existing capital budget
- Benskin House Capital receipt
- Profit share from New Neighbourhoods development
- Capital receipts – non / low income generating and surplus sites
- PWLB borrowing

The funding allocation and affordability has been assessed at a programme, rather than at an individual project level. This is explained in the covering report for Cabinet on 6 December 2021 to which this business case is an appendix.

6. Management case

6.1 Key Risks

The refurbishment of the Colosseum is a significant project for the council and, as outlined within this business case, will bring about notable benefits for the town. As a result, risk management will be key in ensuring that the project is delivered successfully. The process for managing risks is detailed in section 6.2 and key project risks are captured below. A full list of risks will be actively monitored by the council's Project Manager via the project risk log.

Risk	Cause	Consequence	Risk Score	Action agreed to respond / mitigate / control	Updated Risk Score
Lack of ability to obtain listed building consent	Plans are not agreed by Historic England	Change of design, additional costs and extended timelines	3 x 4 = 12	Engage with Historic England and our internal Conservation Planning Officer as plans are developed	2 x 4 = 8
Cost of building materials and / or labour increase	Global and national supply chain issues	Increase costs, change of design	3 x 4 = 12	Sufficient contingency built into cost plan	2 x 4 = 8
Increase in Covid-19 cases leads to another national lockdown	Change in government guidance	Extended timeline for completion. Unable to complete refurbishment by Autumn 2023	2 x 4 = 8	Build allowance into programmes for working in Covid safe environment at all times.	2 x 4 = 8
The Colosseum is not re-open by autumn 2023	Changes to design, impact of Covid-19 lockdowns	Impact on ability for operator to ensure that the venue remains viable	2 x 3 = 6	Clear programme plan in place with sufficient contingency and impact of any delay on operators fully understood	2 x 2 = 4
Stakeholders are not kept informed on progress of the works	Lack of clear communication channels	Disengagement with the project, lack of clarity on when the venue will reopen impacting new launch	3 x 3 = 9	Clear communications plan in place and updates provided to THQ Stakeholder Group and Member Steering Group	2 x 2 = 4



Risk	Cause	Consequence	Risk Score	Action agreed to respond / mitigate / control	Updated Risk Score
Unable to secure an acceptable commercial deal with the operator	Changes in market, refurbishment does meet requirements	Not able to transfer the building risk, reduce the management fee and meet our other aspirations (community programme)	3 x 4 = 12	Soft market testing undertaken to understand operator requirements for the building and reasonable assumptions in relation to a commercial deal	2 x 4 = 8

6.2 Outline Arrangements for Risk Management

All aspects of the programme will operate in line with the council's Risk Management Strategy 2020. All projects within the programme will have a dedicated risk log in the format circulated by the Programme Manager, which will be consistent with the corporate documentation approved by the EPMO. Project Managers will:

- Be responsible for monitoring on a weekly basis and updating their project risk log as and when risks are identified / assessment changes
- Ensure that any risks identified are mitigated as far as possible and that any action taken to do so is appropriately recorded
- Capture all dependencies as risks highlighting the consequence if the dependency is not delivered as anticipated
- Include an updated risk log in each update report to the Programme Manager, identifying any additions or amendments to the log
- Report back on key project risks at each project board meeting so that any operational changes can be made to mitigate the risk
- Report back on key project risks at each programme board and Member Steering Group meetings to ensure that these can be considered collaboratively and any interdependencies identified
- Identify whether any project risks require additional action by the programme board or its members to mitigate the risk from being realised

By reporting all project risks in this way, an overview of risks to the programme can be monitored and managed. Risks which may appear minor to an individual project may have the potential to cause significant issues for other projects within the programme should they be realised, hence the importance of maintaining such an overview.

The Programme Manager will subsequently be responsible for the programme risk log which captures any risks that pose a threat to the overall delivery of the programme. The Programme Manager will:

- Be responsible for monitoring and updating the programme risk log so that these can be managed operationally
- Maintain an oversight of all dependencies between projects and external (to the programme) initiatives to ensure that risks are mitigated
- Ensure that any risks identified are mitigated as far as possible and that any action taken to do so is appropriately recorded
- Decide, through the project highlight reports, whether any risk identified by individual projects poses a threat to the delivery of the programme and its ability to meet its objectives within the given timescales. If such risks are identified, the Programme Manager will additionally record these on the programme risk log
- Include an updated programme risk log in the monthly highlight reports to the programme board and Member Steering Group, identifying any additions or amendments to the log
- Report all programme risks to the Programme Board and Member Steering Group at each meeting and highlight key risks

It should be noted that any risks with a current risk score of 9 or above should be escalated to the council's corporate risk register, in line with the council's Risk Management Strategy. Furthermore, sponsors should ensure that the risk of delivery for any project they are sponsoring is captured on

their service risk register. The council's Enterprise Programme Management Office (EPMO) will be responsible for managing this.

6.3 Outline Arrangements for Change and Contract Management

The Programme Manager will be responsible for preparing highlight reports for the Programme Board. The highlight report will be discussed at the monthly Programme Board meeting and will be provided to the EPMO in accordance with the EPMO schedule. It will be reviewed in detail by the EPMO Assurance Group, who may additionally request attendance of the Programme Manager or constituent Project Managers to undertake a deep dive review of the programme or individual project.

All Project Managers will be required to support the preparation of the highlight report by providing relevant and timely updates to the Programme Manager in the form of individual project highlight reports.

The programme highlight reports, including details of its component projects, will allow an ongoing assessment of any potential variations to the project/programme plan and will outline key risks, issues and interdependencies. Any variations from the agreed plan, including in relation to the refurbishment timescale slippage, cost or resource changes and scope amendment, will be managed in the following way:

Variance	Programme	Project
Time	<p>Programme Manager, has the authority to amend any sub-milestones in the programme plan providing that the programme end date does not change</p> <p>Anything impacting on the programme end date will require sign-off via a change request by the programme board and, subsequently, the Member Steering Group</p>	<p>Project Manager has the authority to amend any sub-milestones in the project plan, providing that the project end date does not change and that any interdependencies are considered in the event that key milestones are likely to be missed. This must be undertaken in consultation with the Programme Manager who will identify if the variance is likely to impact a dependency elsewhere within the programme. If this is the case, a change request to the programme board will be required</p> <p>Anything impacting on the project end date will require sign off from the project board. This must be undertaken in consultation with the Programme Manager who will identify if the variance is likely to impact a dependency elsewhere within the programme. If this is the case, a change request to the programme board will be required</p>
Cost	<p>Any variation in the programme's total cost will need to be raised with the programme board initially and will ultimately require sign off by Full Council</p>	<p>A contingency should be built into all project budgets and should not be exceeded without a formal change request</p> <p>Requests for additional funds by projects, drawing down from the programme contingency, will need to be submitted as a change request and can be authorised by the programme board, providing that this will not impact the final total programme budget</p>

Variance	Programme	Project
Quality / benefits	Any anticipated variation in quality / benefits relating to the programme will require approval from the programme board through a formal change request.	Any anticipated variation in quality / benefits relating to the project will require approval from the project board through a formal change request, which may require escalation to the programme board The Project Manager will retain responsibility for ensuring that the anticipated final outcome of the project is continually measured against the original anticipated quality / benefits

6.4 Member Steering Group

Since the formal initiation of the Town Hall Quarter programme in January 2021 and throughout the development of the business case, the programme has been overseen by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor. The members of the Member Steering Group can be seen on diagram 2 in section 6.5.1 of this business case.

The Member Steering Group has had an ongoing role in shaping the direction of the programme and its constituent projects, receiving reports for comment relating to:

- Performance of the project against council's corporate objectives
- Performance against declared project objectives
- Programme
- Risks and issues
- Commercial and financial considerations
- Masterplanning and design
- Procurement matters
- Project budgets and expenditure

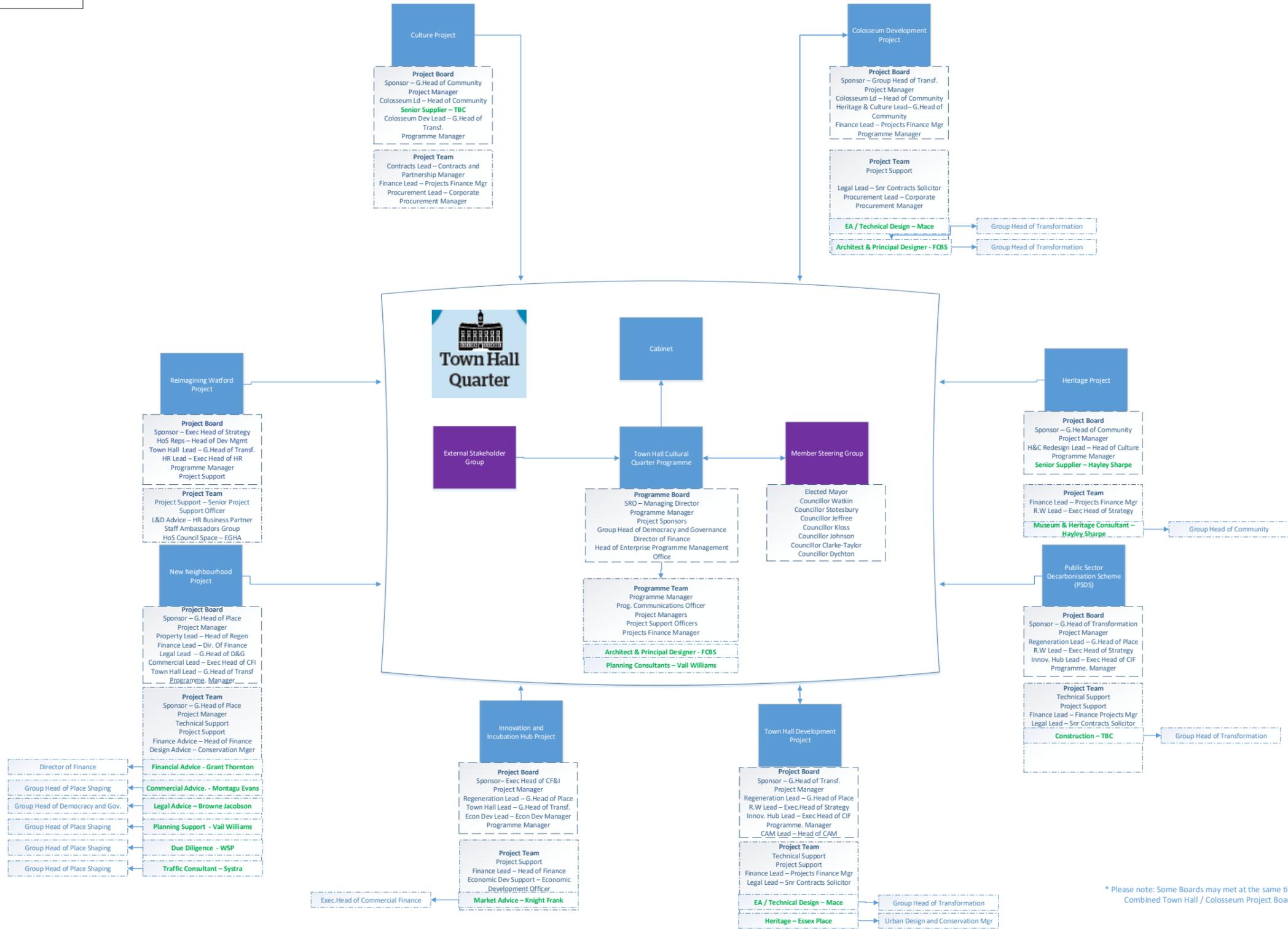
This political oversight will continue as, subject to approval of the business case, the programme progresses. As previously, where a report is taken that requires a formal decision, in accordance with the executive scheme of delegation this will be taken by the Mayor after consideration of the views of the Steering Group and having had the benefit of officer advice.

6.5 Programme management arrangements

As part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, the Colosseum project will report into the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board. This will enable programme risks, issues and dependencies to be managed and instil a discipline and consistency across the programme. Full details of these operational arrangements can be seen in the Programme Definition Document.

The below diagram provides an overview of the programme governance arrangements:

Town Hall Quarter Programme Structure



6.5.1 Programme Board

The Programme Board will meet monthly, with the following responsibilities:

- Provision of overall guidance and direction ensuring the programme remains on track against time, cost and quality requirements
- Internal approval of key deliverables
- Review and approval of the programme plan and any exception plans
- Support and oversight of risk management processes
- Approval of changes
- Resolving strategic and directional issues

6.5.2 Programme Board Membership

The following table details the membership of the Programme Board:

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Managing Director	SRO (Programme Board Chair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous overview of programme viability and delivery • Accountable for the delivery of the overall programme and the achievement of objectives • Decision maker for any delegated approvals
Group Head of Place Shaping	New Neighbourhood Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the New Neighbourhood project • Representative of the New Neighbourhood project at Programme Board level
Group Head of Transformation	Town Hall Development and Colosseum Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Town Hall Development and Colosseum projects • Representative of the Town Hall Development and Colosseum projects at Programme Board level
Executive Head of Strategy and Communications	Reimagining Watford Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Reimagining Watford project • Representative of the Reimagining Watford project at Programme Board level
Group Head of Community and Environmental Services	Culture and Heritage Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Culture and Heritage project • Representative of the Culture and Heritage project at Programme Board level
Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation	Innovation and Incubation Hub Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Innovation and Incubation Hub project • Representative of the Innovation and Incubation project at Programme Board level

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Group Head of Democracy and Governance	Legal Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight and advice relating to all legal aspects of the programme Client management of Legal Advisers
Shared Director of Finance	Finance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight and advice relating to all financial aspects of the programme Client management of Financial Advisers
Head of EPMO	Programme Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the project complies with EPMO and WBC Governance requirements

6.6 Colosseum Project roles and responsibilities

6.6.1 Colosseum Project Board

The Colosseum Project Board will meet on a monthly basis, prior to the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board. Project Boards will be tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Provision of overall guidance and direction ensuring the project remains on track against time, cost and quality requirements
- Discussion and review of key deliverables, submitting any recommendations to the programme board
- Review and approval of the project plan and the recommendation of any exception reports / change requests to the programme board
- Support and oversight of risk management processes

6.6.2 Colosseum Project Board Membership

The following table details the membership of the Project Board:

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Group Head of Transformation	Colosseum and Town Hall Refurbishment Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable for the successful delivery of the Colosseum project Decision maker for any delegated approvals
Senior Project Manager	Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily, operational management of the project, (resource and budget) Ensuring that the necessary actions to meet the key milestones in the project plan are undertaken by members of the project team Reporting on the progress of the project to the Programme Manager Client management of EA / Technical Design (Mace) and Architect / Principle Designer (FCBS) Active management of project risks and issues

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Group Head of Community and Environmental Services	Heritage and Culture Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that heritage and culture requirements are understood in relation to the Colosseum project, including the impact of these requirements on the space needed
Head of Leisure and Community	Colosseum Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the operational impact of the project is understood and aligned Subject matter expert on the Colosseum and the existing strategic and operational management of the service on the building works
Finance Projects Manager	Project Finance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight and advice relating to all financial aspects of the project
Head of Corporate Asset Management	Asset Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and expertise in relation to the Town Hall building, maintenance, compliance and accessibility.
Programme Manager	Programme Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight across the programme, including management of programme level risks, issues and dependencies Development and maintenance of programme timescales and impact on individual projects

6.7 Project Plan

The below plan provides a high level overview of the delivery through to the reopening of the Colosseum in Autumn 2023. It should be noted that this will be developed further once the detailed designs and the associated construction programme has been confirmed.

				2021				2022												2023											
				Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Project	Activity	Start date	End date																												
Colosseum	RIBA Stage 3	Oct-21	Feb-22																												
	Procurement	Mar-22	Jun-22																												
	Statutory Approvals	Apr-22	Jul-22																												
	RIBA Stage 4: Detailed designs	Jul-22	Nov-22																												
	Enabling works	Jul-22	Nov-22																												
	Full Business Case	Nov-22	Nov-22																												
	RIBA Stage 5: Construction	Nov-22	Oct-23																												

Appendices

Appendix 1A – Assumptions

- A new operator is successful procured
 - New operator takes FRI lease and all building liability
 - New operator contract delivers a £0 management fee as a minimum
 - Refurbishment complete and venue reopens in autumn 2023
 - The terms (such as the contract length and programme) to secure the council's financial aspirations from the new operator contract will be acceptable
-
- Appendix 1B – Colosseum Refurbishment RIBA Stage 2 Overview
 - Appendix 1C – Equality Impact Assessment



WATFORD COLOSSEUM

RIBA STAGE 2 SUMMARY

revision : 01

issue date : 08/09/2021

0 | SUMMARY DOCUMENT

0.1 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a concise summary report to outline the current RIBA Stage 2 proposals for the refurbishment of Watford Colosseum. The current proposals largely align with the original Stage 2 design submitted by ACG in September 2020, but have undergone a series of minor updates proposed by FCBS. These updates and the reasoning behind them are outlined in detail in the full Colosseum Stage 2 update report.

While the ACG Stage 2 report did not receive official sign off the proposals were generally accepted by all. The brief for the project remains unchanged, except for an enhanced aspiration to integrate the Colosseum building with the adjacent Town Hall to create a centre of cultural activity.





Be a catalyst for the regeneration of the new Masterplan as part of a **new “cultural hub”** bringing more footfall to the area.



Reinstate the original entrance and make it accessible for performances



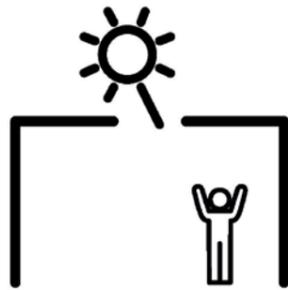
Resolve confusion between the primary and secondary entrances and remove ambiguity



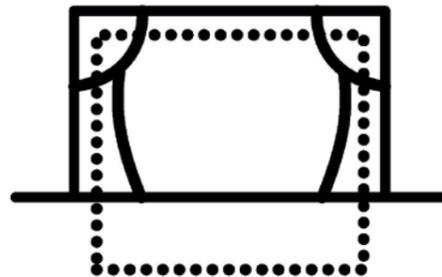
Introduce new external digital signage to advertise current events and improve wayfinding



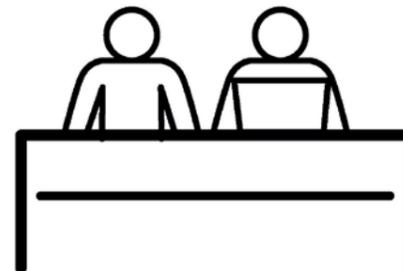
Retain the ‘extension’ entrance for daytime use to **bring in new revenue streams as a bookable studio and cafe**



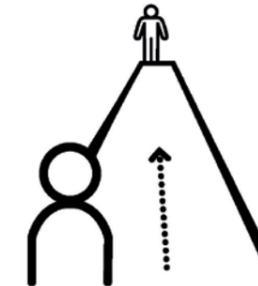
Convert the small hall into a bookable studio with light and ventilation for use as a more flexible space. Retain use as an events space for banqueting and small performances



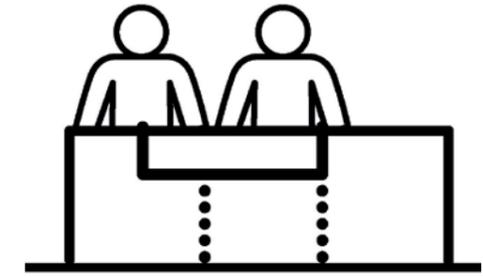
Reinforce or replace the existing stage structure, and provide additional loading capacity over the stage, to **improve performance versatility.**



Introduce bookable meeting spaces



Introduce a new wayfinding “ribbon” in the front-of-house areas to draw circulation through these spaces



Reconfigure the front of house areas to **provide new fixed and demountable bars, merchandise counters, drink shelves and seating areas**



Focus on modernised **Mechanical, Electrical, Utilities and Public Health upgrades.**



Focus on **refreshed branding** to improve the visual identity and profile of The Colosseum.



Improve accessibility for staff, performers and visitors by introducing a new stage platform lift, a changing places facility and accessible bars and counters



Focus on **enhancing the building fabric,** including roofs, windows, wall and thermal efficiency.

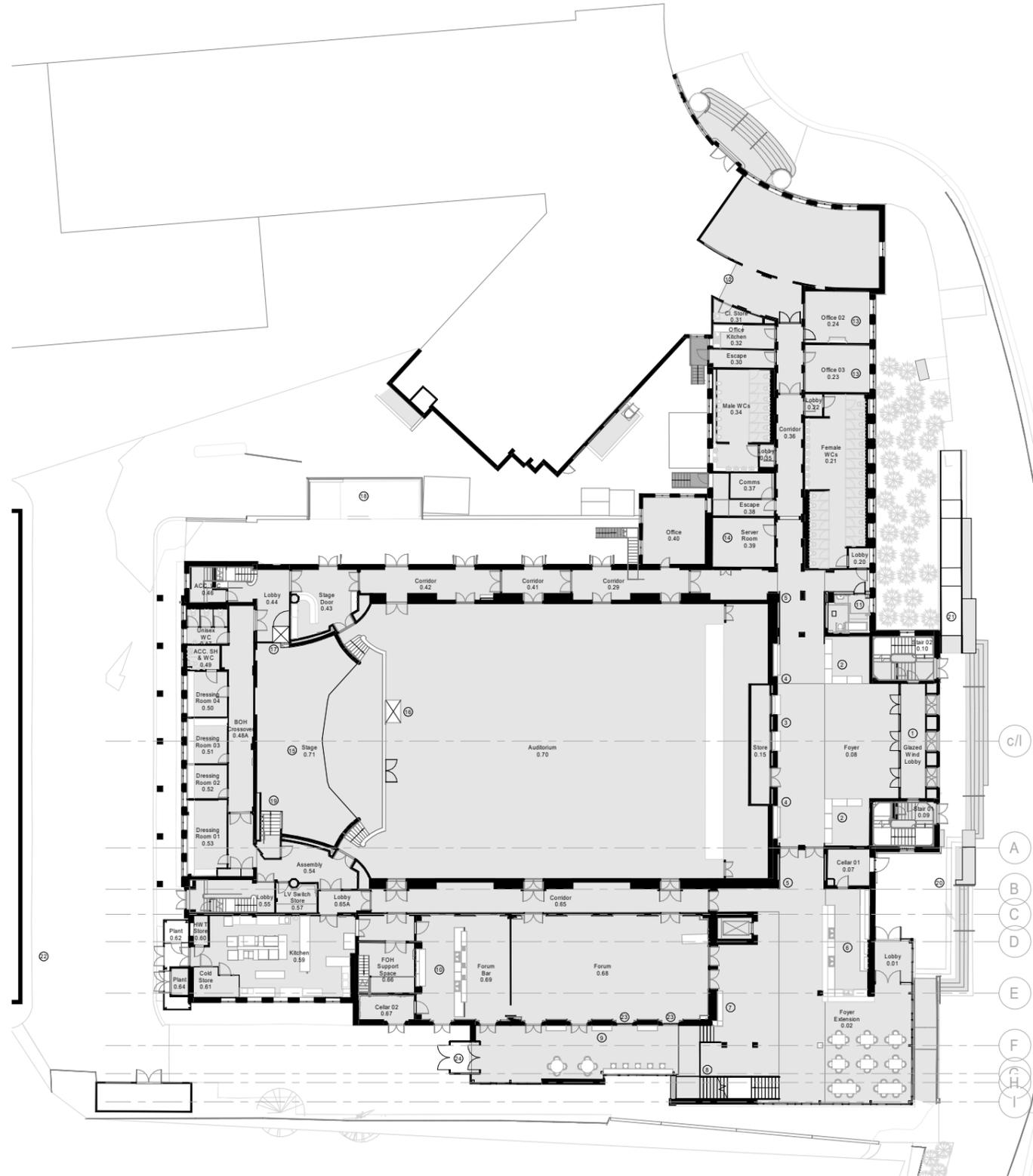


Focus on **regulatory compliance and upgrades** including Fire Safety, DDA Compliance and Sustainability.

GROUND FLOOR

Stage 2 proposals are indicated on the adjacent plan. In some cases this has been updated since the original ACG Stage 2 report. Recent updates are marked in red.

In addition to these largely architectural updates, the building will also be undergoing extensive building fabric improvements alongside upgrades to the existing MEP systems including the provision of on-site energy generation. These upgrades will in part be funded through a PSDS grant and brought forward under a different programme.

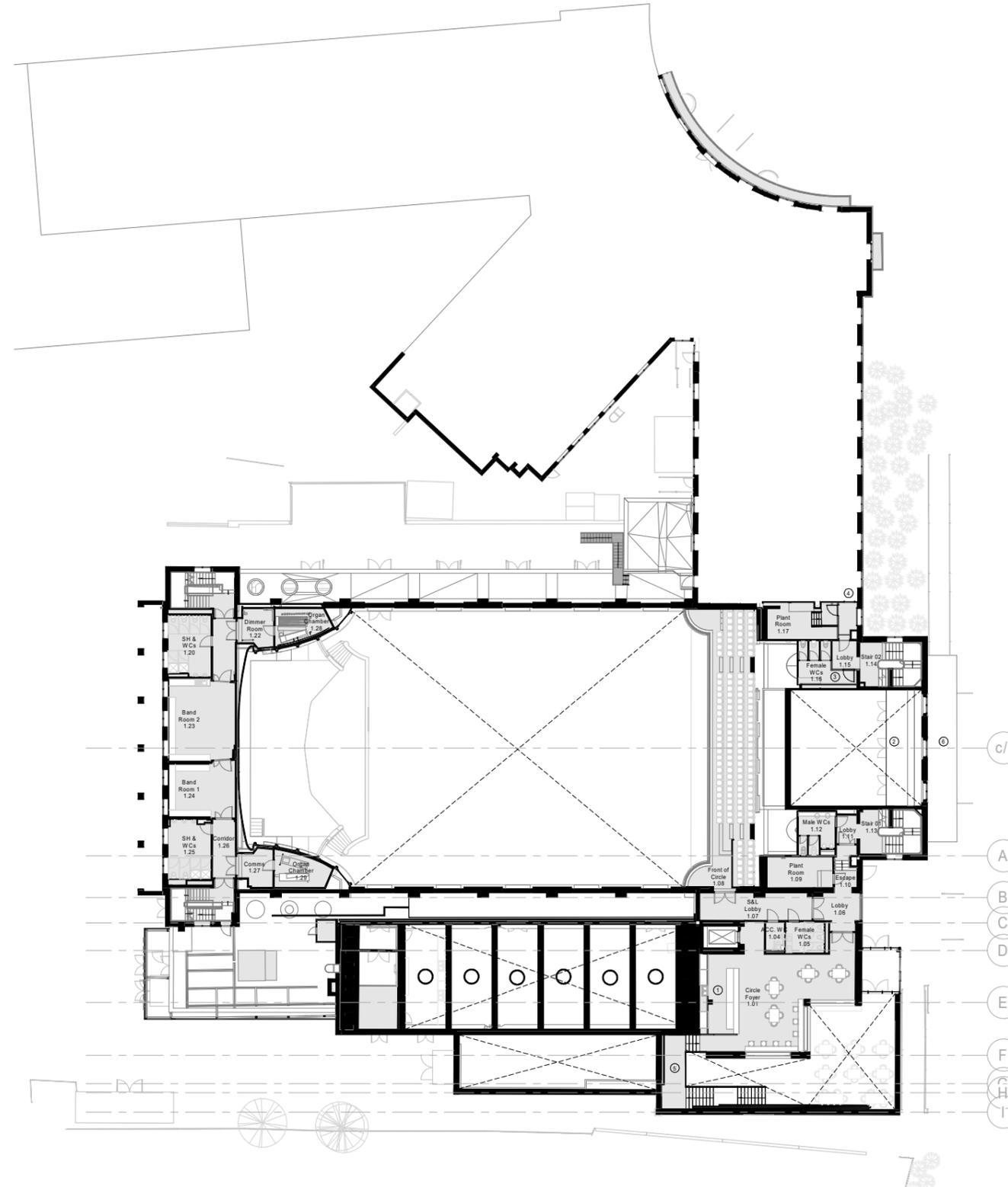


- ① NEW GLAZED WIND LOBBY
ONE DOOR TO BE AUTOMATED WITH PUSH PLATE
SOLID CEILING
- ② NEW DEMOUNTABLE MERCHANDISE COUNTER (BESPOKE JOINERY)
- ③ NEW GLAZED DISPLAY UNITS WITH CUPBOARD AT LOW LEVEL (BESPOKE JOINERY)
- ④ NEW BENCH SEAT WITHIN RECESS (BESPOKE JOINERY)
- ⑤ CORRIDORS/DOOR OPENINGS LINED WITH HARDWOOD TIMBER
- ⑥ NEW MAIN BAR AND CAFE (BESPOKE JOINERY)
- ⑦ NEW SHELVING UNIT FOR INTERMISSION DRINKS (BESPOKE JOINERY) WITH SOLID HARDWOOD FACING
- ⑧ NEW REARRANGED STAIR WITH NEW PARTITION AND DOOR UNDER STAIRS
- ⑨ TEMPORARY FOOD COUNTER LOCATION (FOOD COUNTERS ISSUED BY OPERATOR)
- ⑩ NEW FORUM BAR (BESPOKE JOINERY)
- ⑪ NEW UNDERSIZED CHANGING PLACES WC
- ⑫ NEW CONNECTION TO TOWN HALL
- ⑬ NEW MEETING ROOMS (BOOKABLE)
- ⑭ SERVER ROOM DECOMMISSIONED. POTENTIAL USE AS STORAGE
- ⑮ EXISTING STAGE STRUCTURE REINFORCED OR STAGE REPLACED. REFER TO SFK DRAWINGS.
- ⑯ NEW GET IN LIFT IN EXISTING LOCATION. REFER TO THEATREPLAN SPECIFICATION
- ⑰ NEW PLATFORM LIFT ON STAGE LEFT SIDE
- ⑱ LOADING BAY RECONFIGURED TO PROVIDE ACCESS FOR LONGER VEHICLES
- ⑲ NEW STAIR, BALUSTRADE AND HANDRAILS (STAGE REPLACEMENT OPTION). REFER TO SFK INFORMATION
- ⑳ RECONFIGURED LANDSCAPING AND NEW LOW-LEVEL WALL
- ㉑ NEW RAMP AND LANDSCAPING TO PROVIDE DISABLED ACCESS AND RE-CENTRALISE THE MAIN ENTRANCE
- ㉒ NEW ACCESSIBLE PARKING BAY WITH HATCHING
- ㉓ REINSTATE PREVIOUSLY BLOCKED UP WINDOWS INTO THE FORUM
- ㉔ NEW DRAGHT LOBBY TO REAR ENTRANCE

FIRST FLOOR

Stage 2 proposals are indicated on the adjacent plan. In some cases this has been updated since the original ACG Stage 2 report. Recent updates are marked in red.

In addition to these largely architectural updates, the building will also be undergoing extensive building fabric improvements alongside upgrades to the existing MEP systems including the provision of on-site energy generation. These upgrades will in part be funded through a PSDS grant and brought forward under a different programme.



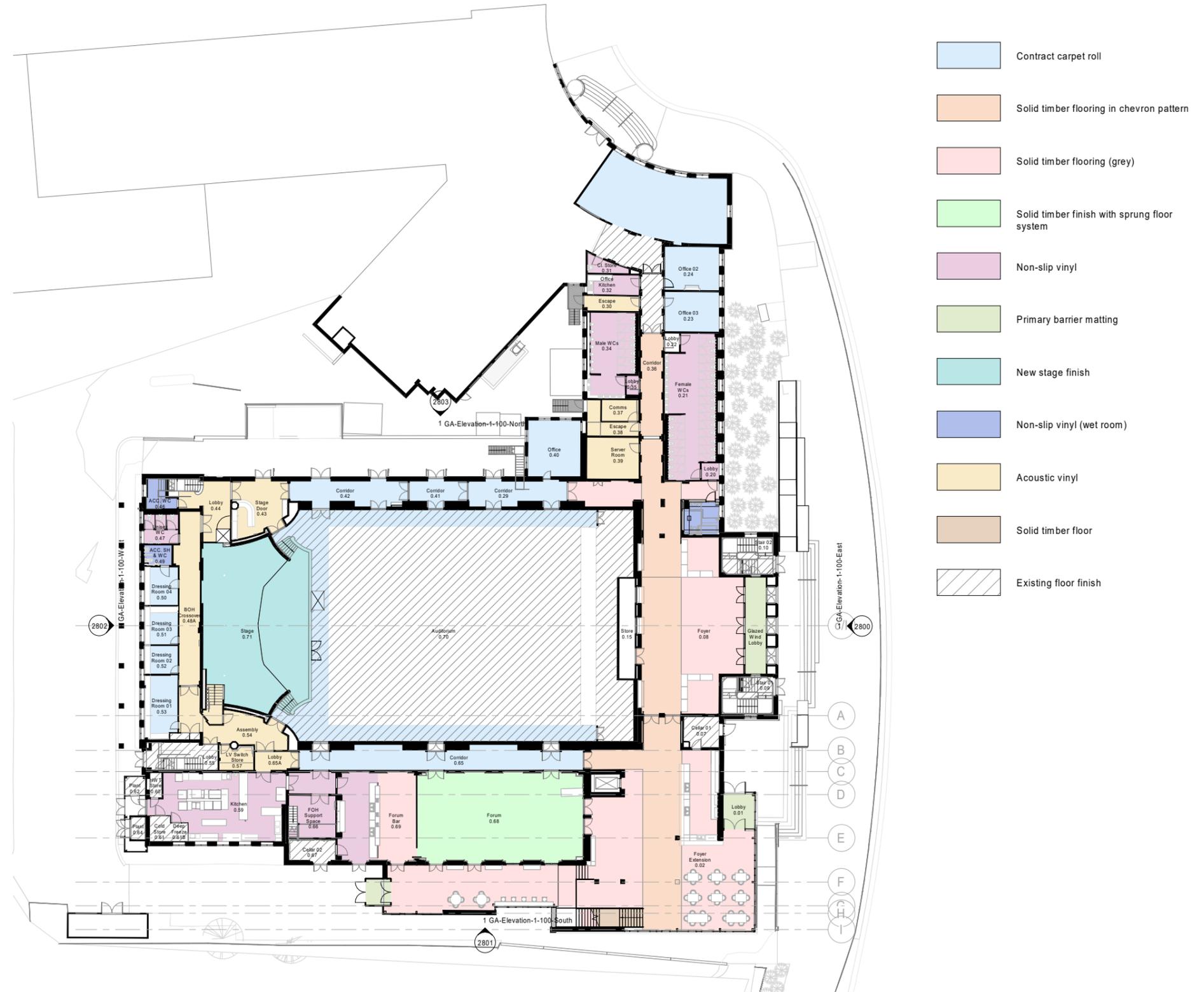
- ① NEW CIRCLE BAR (EXTENDED WITH ADDITIONAL SERVING CAPACITY)
- ② CEILING OVER NEW WIND LOBBY
- ③ NEW LAYOUT TO STAIR LOBBY AND FEMALE WC WITH NEW PARTITIONS AND DOOR
- ④ NEW TOWN HALL CONNECTION
- ⑤ NEW REARRANGED STAIR AND LANDING
- ⑥ CANOPY ROOF REFINISHED WITH ENHANCED ILLUMINATED SIGNAGE

GROUND FLOOR

Proposed ground floor finishes are indicated on the adjacent plan.

In addition to these upgrades the Stage 2 cost plan makes provision for complete front of house wall and ceiling redecoration.

Furthermore, as part of our updated Stage 2 proposals we have proposed additional works to restore and refinish the timber auditorium wall panelling and remove the unsympathetic ventilation surrounds, as well as an option to reupholster some or all of the auditorium seating.

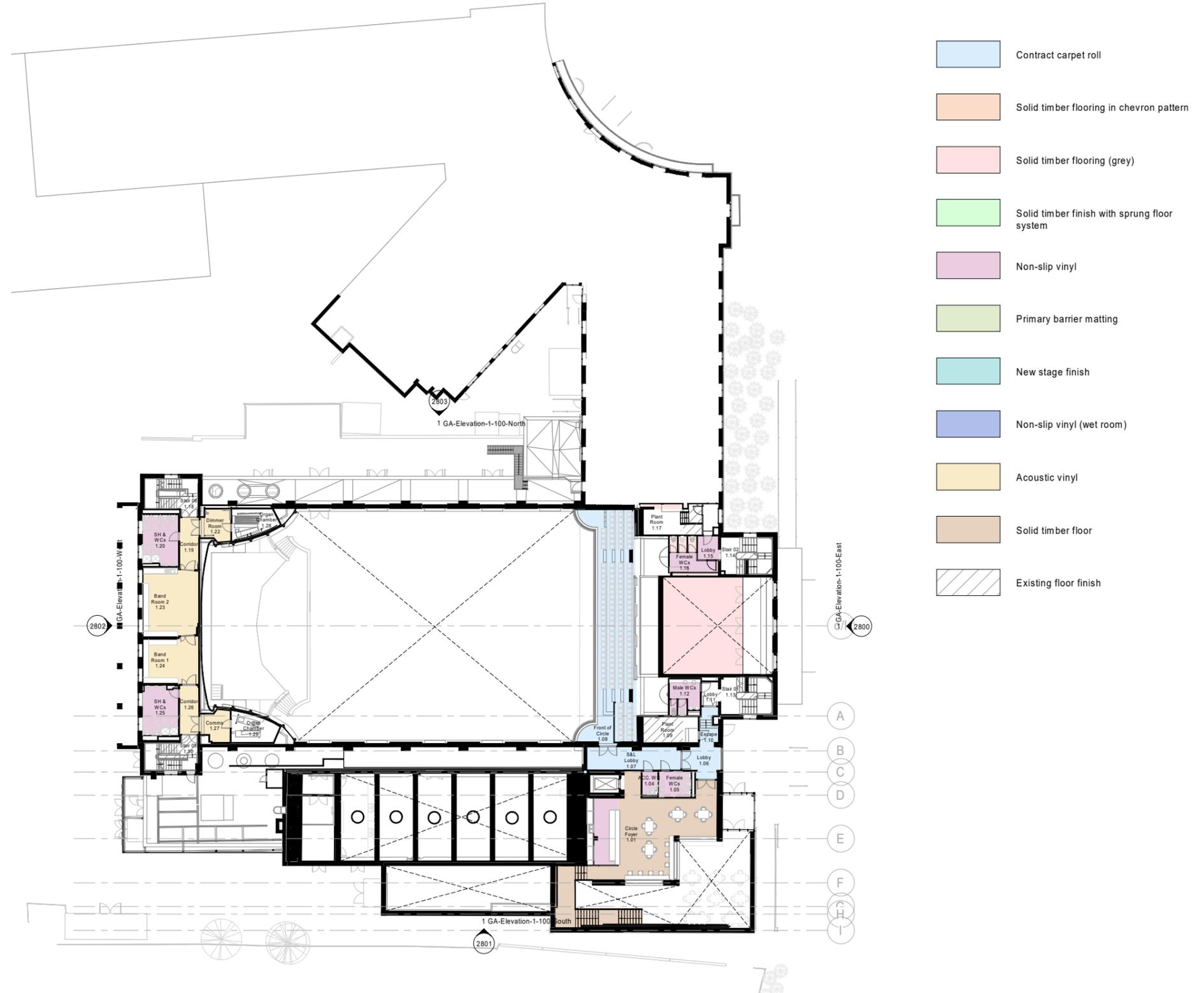


FIRST FLOOR

Proposed first floor finishes are indicated on the adjacent plan.

In addition to these upgrades the Stage 2 cost plan makes provision for complete front of house wall and ceiling redecoration.

Furthermore, as part of our updated Stage 2 proposals we have proposed additional works to restore and refinish the timber auditorium wall panelling and remove the unsympathetic ventilation surrounds, as well as an option to reupholster some or all of the auditorium seating.





Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Town Hall Quarter programme: Colosseum Refurbishment Outline Business Case
Lead officer	Andrew Cox, Group Head of Transformation
Person completing the EIA	Liam Hornsby, Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office
Type of policy, function or service:	Existing (reviewed) New/Proposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Version	v.01- 23 November 2021

1. Background

The Colosseum is an entertainment venue situated adjacent to the Town Hall in Watford town centre. The refurbishment of the building is an integral part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, a ten year comprehensive programme of activity which serves to deliver a vision of *'a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, creating exciting new opportunities for our residents, businesses and community, contributing to Watford's prosperity and success'*.

The Colosseum, which was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, has previously been managed by an operator whose contract was terminated by mutual agreement in December 2020. The cessation of the operator contract provides an ideal opportunity to undertake much needed refurbishment and reconfiguration work to the building whilst causing the minimum disruption possible. The programme of work expects the building to reopen with a new operator in autumn 2023. The business case at Appendix 1, therefore, recommends a full refurbishment of the Colosseum building to ensure that it meets the requirements of those who will be using it as the building is opened up more widely for the community.

Refurbishment of the building will significantly reduce the risk of building failure, provide an opportunity to replace end-of-life equipment and facilitate a more beneficial commercial arrangement with a future operator, seeking to pass the building and maintenance liability to the operator and potentially negating the need for an operator management fee. The project will considerably extend the lifetime of the building whilst ensuring it is energy efficient, meets modern requirements in terms of accessibility and compliance and importantly respects the building's heritage and history

In parallel to this, the council has been awarded £3.7m from the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to decarbonise the Town Hall and Colosseum buildings which includes the refurbishment of windows, heating control and lighting improvements, cavity wall and roof insulation enhancements and the introduction of photovoltaic panels and storage. This will allow the Colosseum to contribute to the council's sustainability ambitions and target of reaching net carbon neutral by 2030.

As a venue for all parts of our community and beyond, understanding the impact on the community is fundamental to ensuring we meet our commitment to equalities and diversity and our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the Town Hall refurbishment on the people in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

This Equalities Impact Assessment will cover the physical refurbishment of the building.

3. What we know about the Watford population

Population

The current population of Watford is 96,600 (ONS mid-2020 estimate). This was slightly less than estimated in 2018 (96,800 rounded). The slowing of population growth across the UK (marked by a fall in Watford) is attributed to the lowest number of births for 14 years alongside an increase in emigration and a fall in international immigration.

The current government projection for population shows Watford's population as 98,000 in 2040.

The graphs below show a comparison between the sex and age profile of England's population with that of Watford. (ONS 2020).

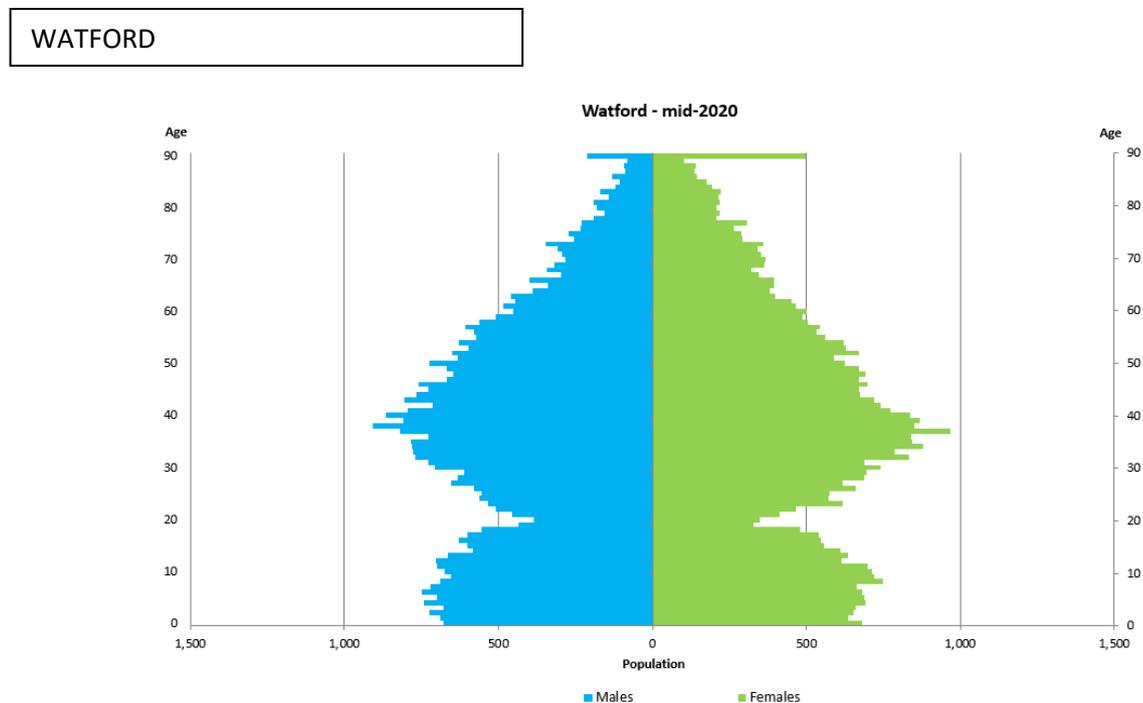


Diagram 1: Watford's population in age bands

ENGLAND

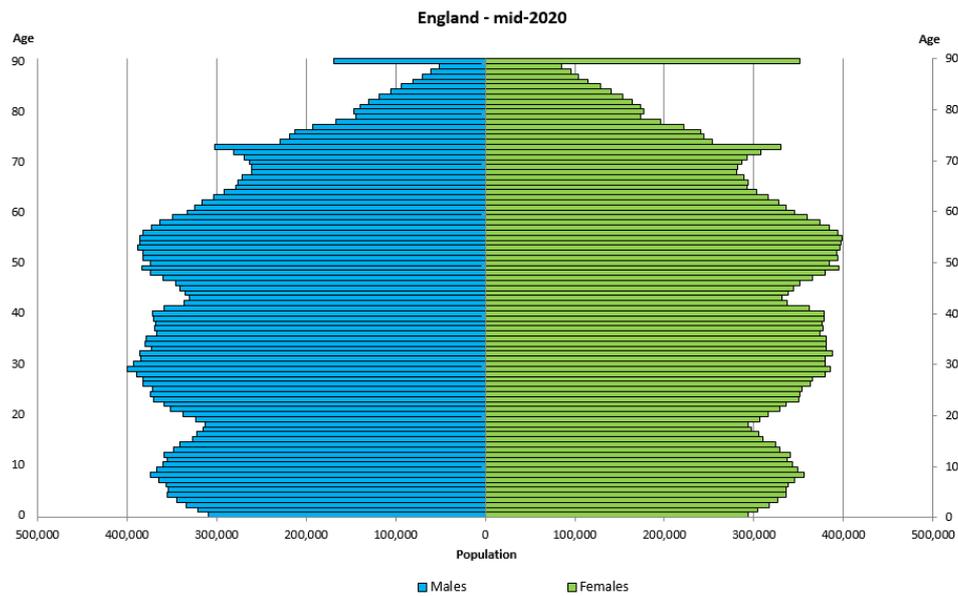


Diagram 2: England's population in age bands

The largest populations by age band in Watford are (mid 2020):

- 30-39 (16,110)
- 40-49 (14,600)
- 0-9 (13,800)

The average (mean age) for Watford is 37 years. This is also the mode age (i.e. the age with the most number of residents). This compares to an average age of 40 years for England.

The numbers in each successive age-band fall progressively from 40-49 until there are estimated to be 6,100 who are 75+.

The comparison with England overall highlights a younger profile than is seen nationally, with the age distribution indicating that Watford is a town where there is likely to be a high proportion of households with younger children and bringing up families. Whilst Watford is a town for all, it is recognised that our future plans for the Colosseum need to reflect the large number of young people and families.

Population density

Population density (mid 2020) in Watford is high at 4,509 people per sq. km compared to just 728 and 434 people per sq. km in Hertfordshire and England respectively. This puts Watford in the top 40 most densely populated local authority areas in the UK. It is worth noting, however, that in comparison with many metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, our density is relatively low.

We recognise this means, overall, that high quality leisure and cultural facilities are particularly valuable to residents and quality of life in the town. Similarly, it is recognised that areas such as the High Street / town centre are used as spaces for people to meet, exercise and relax.

Number of households

The ONS data, based on the 2011 census, says that there were 36,681 households in Watford at the time of

the Census; as of 31 May 2020 the figure was 40,275 (council tax base).

The average household size in Watford is currently 2.45. This is currently average for the region. Nationally, there is downward trend in household size projected over the next 20 years. The Watford average household size is envisaged to drop to 2.33 person household in 2039, which this is larger than that projected for the English average (2.21 in 2039) and the Hertfordshire average (2.29 in 2039). These projections have implications for Watford in terms of development and growth.

Household Composition

From the 2016 projections, one person households see the biggest increase in household growth in Watford, representing 44% of the total household growth. However, households with dependent children see the next biggest rise, with 35% of household growth; couples with other adults make up 9%; other (multi-person adult) households make up 7% and couple households (without children or other adults) make up the remaining 6% of all estimated growth.

Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire; it is one of the strengths of the town and what makes it such a vibrant and diverse place to live and work. It is recognised that the a Colosseum with a diverse and varied programme in a sustainable building should appeal to all sectors of the diverse population.

For Watford, the Census 2011 shows the following main breakdown in terms of ethnicity: White British (61.9%), White other (7.7%), Pakistani (6.7%), British Indian (5.5%), British other Asian (4.4%) and African (3.5%), White Irish (2.3%) and Caribbean (1.7%).

The full breakdown from the Census 2011 is at Appendix 2D1.

In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by ethnicity. This did not report ethnicities to the level of granularity of the Census but the estimates for 2016 were: White British (59% - 57,000 residents), Asian / Asian British (19% - 19,000 residents), All Other White (12% - 12,000 residents), Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (4% - 4,000 residents), Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group (4% - 4,000 residents) and Other Ethnic Group (1% - 1,000 residents).

National insurance registration

Census information is now 10 years old and it is likely that the ethnic profile of the borough has changed during this time. For example, the Census would not have captured the more recent EU arrivals to the borough (EU2 countries – Romania and Bulgaria, who were given residency rights in 2014). We know from other data such as National Insurance Registration that Watford has experienced a relatively high increase in nationals from the EU2 countries applying for National Insurance registrations as Watford residents. This follows a period of a high number from EU8 countries (including Poland, Latvia, Lithuania) who were given freedom of movement to the UK from 2004. Throughout the period the arrival of new residents from south Asia (e.g. Pakistan / India) has remained relatively constant.

The National Insurance Registrations for the year to March 2021 shows a significant reduction from the previous year (down from 2,194 registrations to 838. The combined effects of the global pandemic and Brexit have clearly impacted inward migration.

Of those who did register, 109 were from Romania and Bulgaria, 409 from South Asia and 89 from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, 65 came from South East Asia, 55 from sub Saharan Africa, 17 from North Africa and 27 from Central and South America.

The most recent breakdown (March 2021) is at Appendix 2D2.

Language spoken at home

Other data sources, including school language survey on the languages spoken by Watford school children at home, endorse the National Insurance findings that Watford remains a town with a diverse community with English still the predominant language (at around 60%) followed by (in order of self-selection by Watford families): Urdu, Polish, Tamil, Romanian, Gujarati, Punjabi, Gujarati and Hindi. The most selected African language spoken is Arabic (113 families – although not spoken exclusively in Africa) and Akan/Twi-Fante (78 families).

The full breakdown for 2018 is at Appendix 2D3.

Births and origin of parents

In 2019, nearly 60% (58.8%) of children born to Watford based parents, had one or both parents born outside of the UK, with 42% having both parents born outside of the UK. 52% of new mothers in Watford were born outside of the UK (1,344 births in total, with 644 to mothers born in the UK and 700 born outside of the UK). Of these, 240 mothers were born in the 'new' EU countries – those that had joined since 2004, 300 were born elsewhere within the EU and 251 in the Middle East and Asia. 80 mothers were born in Africa.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) quarterly statistics (28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021) – experimental data

In May 2021, the Government issued data on the number of applications made to the EUSS from 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021, and applications concluded during the same time period. This shows that up to March 2020, 16,910 people in Watford had applied for EUSS. Of these, the following were the highest number of nationalities who had applied: Romanian (5,120), Polish (2,220), Italian (1,490), Portuguese (1,320), Bulgarian (800), Spanish (730) and Hungarian (720).

The full analysis is at Appendix 2D4.

Disability / Health

Around 85% of the population of Watford state that they have 'good health' and just under 14% recorded a disability (from Census 2011). We do not have details as to what these disabilities are but they will include a wide range of physical and mental health disabilities or impairments.

The 2019 NHS Health Profile's summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is 'varied' compared with the England average.

About 11% (2,305) of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average. Life expectancy is 6.1 years lower for men and 2.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Watford than in the least deprived areas.

Religion / belief

The religious breakdown in the Census 2011 of the main religions in Watford was: Christian (54.1%), Muslim (9.8%), Hindu (4.8%), with no religion stated at 21.4%. In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by religion. This took an estimated population of 94,000 for Watford and the main religions identified through the estimates were: Christian (53%), Muslim (10%), Hindu (9%) with no religion at 26%.

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment

Watford has no specific data on the transgender community within the borough or for the sexual

orientation of our community. Both these are covered by the Equality Act 2010. However, it is anticipated that this information will be available shortly following the results of the 2021 Census.

Education and skills

A skilled workforce supports the economic development and employment aspirations for Watford.

Watford residents are well educated with 49% (2020)¹ educated to NVQ level 4+ compared to 47% and 42.8% for Hertfordshire and England respectively. The number educated to NVQ level 3+ is also higher than both Hertfordshire and England but drops below these comparator levels for qualifications above NVQ level 2 and NVQ level 1.

It is estimated that 13.3% of Watford residents have no or unrecognised qualifications compared to 10.4% and 11.9% for Hertfordshire and England. This lack of qualifications is a cause for concern in what will become an increasingly competitive jobs market as businesses recover from the pandemic.

Watford has a slightly higher percentage of micro enterprises (90.2%) than England overall (89.7%) but slightly lower than Hertfordshire (91.0%), which shows there is considerable scope for an Innovation and Incubation to support start-ups and growing micro businesses (micro businesses are those with 0-9 employees so includes sole traders).

Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019 were published by the Government in September 2019, and updates the previous 2015 Indices, published in September 2015. The Indices of Deprivation measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), in England

The IoD2019 is based on 39 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which are combined and weighted to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019.

In the IMD 2019, Watford is ranked 195 out of 317 authorities, putting it in the 7th decile nationally. This means that, overall, Watford is less deprived than half the authorities in England.

Watford is, however, the third most deprived authority in Hertfordshire. (Stevenage and Broxbourne are the most deprived.) Conversely, three Hertfordshire authorities are among the 10% least deprived authorities in England (Three Rivers, East Herts and St Albans).

Overall, Watford is not an area with significant deprivation issues and the majority of the LSOAs within the town are in the bottom 50% of LSOAs nationally for deprivation; the borough's position has improved relative to that of 2015.

The combined deprivation index, which weights income and employment more heavily than the other domains, obscures the more deprived areas in Watford, which are affected by crime, living environment deprivation, health and disability, and education, skills and training deprivation in particular. This is, at least in part, because income and employment deprivation are less of an issue for Watford than for other areas.

The ten most deprived LSOAs in Watford, as ranked in the IMD 2019 are as follows (the ranking for the last IMD data in 2015 is shown in brackets in the first column). The LSOA, which contains some of Whippendell Road, Chester Road and Durban Road West is within the second most deprived health and disability quartile does not feature in the top 10 most deprived LSOAs

¹ Source: ONS Annual population survey -

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157230/report.aspx?c1=1941962834&c2=2092957699#tabquals>

The LSOA in which the Town Hall Quarter is located is within Park Ward and, whilst not one of the most deprived in Watford, is close to more deprived areas within Central and Vicarage wards.

Watford rank	Ward	LSOA code	Hertfordshire		England	
			Rank	Decile in Herts (1st = most deprived)	Rank	Decile (1st = most deprived)
1 (1)	Central (Water Lane, Gladstone Road, Grosvenor Road, part of Radlett Road, Brockleberry Close, Raphael Drive, top part of Queens Road)	E01023860 (009B)	5 (5)	1st (1st)	5055 (5005)	2nd (2nd)
2 (3)	Holywell (Caractacus Green, part of Charlock Way, Moor View, Jellicoe Road, Stripling Way, Rose Gardens)	E01023865 (011C)	21 (22)	1st (1st)	7239 (7800)	3rd (3rd)
3 (2)	Meriden (Garsmouth Way, Aldbury Close, Harvest End, part of York Way)	E01023876 (003D)	26(19)	1st (1st)	7924 (7590)	3rd (3rd)
4 (4)	Holywell (Ascot Road, Greenhill Crescent, Caxton Way, Croxley View)	E01023866 (011D)	27 (30)	1st (1st)	8294 (9203)	3rd (3rd)
5 (7)	Woodside (Haines Way, Queenswood Crescent, Sheriff Way, Nottingham Close)	E01023906 (001C)	61 (41)	1st (1st)	10719 (10062)	4th (4th)
6 (10)	Oxhey (Deacons Hill, Blackwell Drive, Riverside Road, Eastbury Road, Thorpe Crescent)	E01023883 (012B)	62 (49)	1st (1st)	10758 (10710)	4th (4th)
7 (13)	Callowland (Maude Crescent, St George's Road, Breakspeare Close, Nicholas Close)	E01023857 (006C)	67 (56)	1st (1st)	10894 (10812)	4th (4th)
8 (9)	Meriden (Gaddesden Crescent, Bovingdon Crescent, Garston Lane)	E01023877 (003E)	73 (75)	2nd (2nd)	11225 (11837)	4th (4th)
9 (12)	Leggatts (The Harebreaks, Chestnut Walk, Foxhill, Brushrise, Elm Grove)	E01023870 (004C)	78 (52)	2nd (1st)	11515 (10734)	4th (4th)
10 (5)	Stanborough (Clarke Way, Rushton Avenue, Orbital Crescent, Harris Road)	E01023891 (002B)	92 (31)	1st (1st)	11970 (9377)	4th (3rd)

Table 1: Watford Ward Data from the English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019

MOSAIC profile

Our MOSAIC profiling of the borough enhances our understanding of our population and provides valuable context for our decision-making as well as underpinning our communications and engagement. It confirms we are a young and diverse borough.

Type Code	Type Label	Type Description	2020 Households	2020 Watford %	Trend since 2017	2017 Rank
O61	Career Builders	Professional singles and couples in their 20s and 30s progressing in their field of work from commutabl	5257	13.3%	↑	1
G26	Cafés and Catchments	Affluent families with growing children living in upmarket housing in city environs	3660	9.2%	↑	3
N58	Culture & Comfort	Thriving families with good incomes in diverse suburbs	3575	9.0%	↓	2
O63	Flexible Workforce	Successful young renters ready to move to follow worthwhile incomes from service sector jobs	2927	7.4%	↑	6
I36	Solid Economy	Stable families with children, renting higher value homes from social landlords	2701	6.8%	↑	5
N57	Community Elders	Established older households owning city homes in diverse neighbourhoods	2574	6.5%	↑	9
H30	Primary Ambitions	Families with school-age children, who have bought the best house they can afford within popular neigh	2434	6.1%	↑	7
G27	Thriving Independence	Well-qualified older singles with incomes from successful professional careers in good quality housing	1949	4.9%	↓	4
N60	Ageing Access	Older residents owning small inner suburban properties with good access to amenities	1731	4.4%	↑	10
B05	Premium Fortunes	Asset-rich families with substantial income, established in distinctive, expansive homes in wealthy encl	1448	3.6%	↓	8
Total (Top 10)			28256			
Total Households in Watford			39675			

Table 2: Watford's MOSAIC profile (2019)

4. Feedback from recent engagement

To support understanding of the community's views and future aspirations for the Colosseum, an online survey was undertaken in June 2021. 541 people accessed the survey and of these 85% lived in Watford.

Overall, there was positive feedback on the Colosseum and clear enthusiasm for the venue amongst both individual visitors and arts / entertainment groups – the latter answering specific questions on potential future use.

From those with protected characteristics:

- Significantly more women than men responded to the survey with over two thirds of responses from women (68%) compared with 30% men. 1% of respondents identified as non-binary. It is not possible to draw a conclusion as to why there would be a difference in the sex of those responding – looking at the most popular performances that people had attended (comedy and rock / pop bands) would not account for the difference
- There was a good age range responding to the survey under 15 – 75+ years. The main age range responding was 50 – 54 years and, overall, the age profile was skewed towards the 50+ age ranges. Looking forward, the appeal of the venue, particularly programming, could be an area to explore from provide appeal to younger people
- Over 10% of the respondents reported a disability, which is encouraging – cross analysing shows that these respondents had visited the Colosseum, which is something to build on in terms of the designs for the refurbishment as well as the programming
- A wide variety of races responded to the survey with the majority of respondents identifying as White British respondents. Again looking forward, the appeal of the venue, particularly programming, could be an area to explore from provide appeal to younger people

5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the Colosseum Refurbishment project

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the Town Hall refurbishment:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

The Colosseum refurbishment project will see the space within the building brought up to modern standards. This will include ensuring that the building is fully inclusive and accessible in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and with best practice in terms of meeting the needs of our diverse community, including those with protected characteristics. This will be important in

ensuring that all visitors to the future Colosseum building can access each part of it and enjoy the full range of events, activities and facilities the refurbished building will offer. This will equally apply to toilet facilities, ensuring that disabled, gender neutral and baby change facilities are available for users of and visitors to the Colosseum.

Blue badge parking will also be retained close to the Colosseum.

During the refurbishment the Colosseum building will be closed to members of the public. Other venues across the town, including Watford Palace Theatre and Watford Pumphouse, who work closely with many of the key cultural providers and groups in Watford, will remain available throughout the Colosseum closure.

The refurbishment of the Colosseum will provide the council with an opportunity to achieve a commercial deal with an experience operator who, in turn, will be able to provide a diverse and varied programme of activities and events within the Colosseum, for residents and visitors from all backgrounds, including those with protected characteristics. Furthermore, it remains the council's intention that the refurbishment of the Colosseum will provide additional opportunities for the building to be opened up to the community, providing further opportunities for residents and groups to utilise the facilities.

A. Positive impacts

Potential positive effects

The Colosseum refurbishment is intended to improve the space in the Colosseum, allowing it to be opened up to the community.

Some of the positive impacts include:

- Ensuring that the Colosseum is fully DDA compliant and accessible for all visitors – building in those elements that will send a positive message to our diverse community that the Colosseum is somewhere they will feel welcome, respected and included
- Improved facilities, including toilets, for those with protected characteristics
- All equality groups should benefit from activities to strengthen the local economy, such as the location of an improved live venue in the heart of the town bringing more people into the Town Centre
- All groups will benefit from our ambition to reduce the carbon footprint of the Colosseum building through the decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures
- Overall, with a wider community role and focus, the Colosseum can support the council foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not
- Building on the understanding of the Watford community, work with the future operator to ensure the programme of entertainment reflects and attracts the diverse Watford community

Recommendation 1: Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and engagement and updating the Watford context on a regular basis, particularly through the Census 2021 information we expect in the next couple of years

Recommendation 2: Ensure our consultation and engagement with our community continues to collect relevant equalities data so we have a better understanding of the impact of our work, strengthening our explanation of why we need to collect this and explaining how the information is used to support our work and better community outcomes

Recommendation 3: Seek further community feedback on the ideas for the Colosseum, particularly relating to those with protected characteristics

Recommendation 4: Undertake a further Equalities Impact Assessment as part of the process to appoint an operator for the building so that the impact of the proposed programme of events on equalities can be assessed.

B. Negative impacts

Potential negative effects

These would arise if equalities and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are not considered through the design and delivery of the Colosseum refurbishment. This would result in a refurbished Colosseum that has not taken into account the needs of the community, particularly those with a protected characteristics.

The main ways of mitigating these potential negative effects:

- Town Hall Quarter programme board, made up of project sponsors and chaired by the Managing Director as the programme Senior Responsible Office, will receive updates on design and any potential impact on equalities
- Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor and formed of elected representatives, will receive updates on design and any potential impact on equalities
- Working with our community through our Town Hall Quarter stakeholder group and Cultural Leaders Group to find out what is important to them and to hear their views
- Explore other Watford forums / groups who could provide relevant input, ideas and views, particularly where they represent or include those with protected characteristics

No negative impacts which cannot be mitigated have been identified in relation to the refurbishment of the building.

6. Overall conclusion

This EIA has taken into account the council's public sector equality duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 and is intended to assist the council in meeting its duty.

The information within this report and an assessment of both the positive and negative impacts together indicate that the Colosseum refurbishment will deliver positive impacts for the Watford community. This is because the refurbishment is ultimately intended to improve the space within the Colosseum, providing opportunities for it to be opened up to the community and brought up to modern standards, including in relation to sustainability and accessibility.

Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
The Colosseum is DDA compliant and accessible for all visitors	Age and disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for the building to be DDA compliant will form part of the brief for the Colosseum design and construction
Improved facilities, including toilets	Disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for all existing facilities (such as disabled toilets and baby changing facilities) to be retained and improved will form part of the brief for the Colosseum design and construction The requirement for new facilities, such as gender neutral toilets, will form part of the brief for the Colosseum design and construction
More residents and visitors of all background having access to the heritage Colosseum building, where more people of all ages will be able to benefit from the culture and arts	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a refurbished building which is commercially attractive to an operator which will, in turn, allow for a diverse and varied programme of events and activities for residents and visitors of all ages

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
All equality groups should benefit from activities to strengthen the local economy, such as a refurbished Colosseum bringing more people into the Town Centre	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a refurbished building which is commercially attractive to an operator which will, in turn, allow for a diverse and varied programme of events and activities for residents and visitors of all ages, bringing more people into the town centre. Consultation to date has indicated that many visitors to a refurbished Colosseum would combine their visit with a drink, meal or shopping in the town centre.
All groups will benefit from our ambition to reduce the carbon footprint of the Colosseum building	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the decarbonisation and energy efficiency works are completed and benefits tracked and realised.
Ensure our consultation and engagement with our community continues to collect relevant equalities data so we have a better understanding of the impact of our work	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consultations seek feedback from our communities and staff in terms of their demographics and protected characteristics, where relevant • Ensure feedback is considered in decision making where relevant and appropriate • Make sure we explain why we are collecting information on protected characteristics and show how it can make a real difference

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
The Colosseum can help to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful communications and engagement with the community • A varied and diverse programme in a refurbished, inclusive and accessible building

Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
Lack of understanding of the community and issues that are affecting those with a protected characteristic	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and updating the Watford context on a regular basis • Ensure learning from Covid-19 is built into our planning and that we respond to what emerges from research in terms of inequalities and impact on protected characteristics

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with our community to understand from them about issues and what matters to them • Build greater understanding through engagement with our community and work with them to support • Ensure EIAs are carried out, are effective and support decision making

This Equalities Impact Analysis has been developed by:

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Town Hall Quarter Programme: Town Hall Refurbishment Outline Business Case

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1. Executive Summary

The Town Hall is a 1930s heritage building located at the northern end of Watford town centre and is currently the home of Watford Borough Council. The revitalisation of the building enabled by the refurbishment is an integral part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, a ten year comprehensive programme of activity which serves to deliver a vision of *'a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, creating exciting new opportunities for our residents, businesses and community, contributing to Watford's prosperity and success'*.

The building is under-utilised, particularly given the change in ways of working as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and is in need of significant refurbishment. There is therefore an opportunity to fundamentally change the way in which the Town Hall is used, to seek to maximise the value the building brings to the community and council through finding additional uses for the space with a particular objective to open it up for more community use.

This business case proposes the refurbishment of building and its future use as the location of Watford Museum, a significantly reduced but predominantly collaborative council space and the home of the proposed Innovation and Incubation Hub. The designs also include an on-site public café opening out on to the new town square delivered through the public realm improvements by our New Neighbourhood Joint Venture partners and space for community and commercial use. The anticipated cost of the works stand at £11.55m and cover not just the much needed refurbishment of the main Town Hall building, but also the fit out for the Museum towards the front of the building, currently housing the Committee Rooms on the first floor and the IT server room and part of the current Colosseum space on the ground floor, the fit out of the Innovation and Incubation hub, the demolition of the semi-permanent building known as the Terrapin adjacent to Peace Prospect and the refurbishment of the Annexe, situated towards the rear of the main Town Hall building.

These works will collectively deliver significant benefits to residents, the town and the council.

- A refreshed, exciting and modern museum offer would be available in the heritage rooms and part of the ground floor of the Town Hall for residents and visitors, creating a cultural hub with the Colosseum and driving further footfall to the town centre, supporting our local businesses. This would allow the sale of Benskin House which is no longer suitable as a location for a modern museum and realise a capital receipt.
- The Innovation and Incubation Hub, managed by an experienced operator, would serve to support the local economy and actively grow small start-up businesses. It typically offers a structured growth pathway for businesses, through a range of packages, resulting in newly created businesses moving onto their own accommodation as they expand, making way for newcomers to start their journey.
- The introduction of agile ways of working for the council and the adoption of new values and behaviours will allow the council footprint to reduce significantly freeing up the existing space for the above uses. The Town Hall space available for council staff will be focused on collaboration, building on the lessons learnt and new ways of working embraced over the last 18 months to provide the best service for customers, residents and businesses.

Whilst a number of options, including do nothing, do minimum and a building refurbishment with an extension, were considered, the only affordable option which allows the council to deliver on each of the project objectives is to proceed with the delivery of a comprehensive refurbishment of the existing buildings and the fit out to serve the proposed future uses of the Town Hall.

Whilst the refurbishment of the Town Hall itself will bring benefits including a reduction in ongoing repairs and maintenance costs, enhanced utility efficiency and improved accessibility, it also enables

significant benefits through creating space from which the other uses can operate with the key benefits being delivered by those uses.

The relocated and reimagined Museum is expected to deliver a range of benefits including a 150% increase in visitor numbers, 200% increase in volunteer hours and increased employment within the town. It will also provide an enhanced visitor experience, maximising opportunities to access and participate in heritage and culture activities, providing additional opportunities for skills development and adult learning and delivering an education programme for young people and children. In addition, there is a significantly increased estimated economic impact from a new museum to the town of £380k per annum, from £104k currently.

Similarly, the Innovation and Incubation Hub will support small and medium enterprises across the region to become established businesses, boosting employment through support packages and providing sector growth through occupants 'clustering' in one place. It will also create higher value direct job and indirect local supply chain employment contributing to the local economy and breathe new life into the Town Hall Quarter as parts of its regeneration through the provision of a flexible space for businesses to grow and reducing the need to commute away from the town. It is estimated that every two years 60 people in 20 businesses will 'graduate' from the Hub with six businesses successfully transitioning from being classed as 'micro' to 'small'. Whilst longer term benefits such as an increased business survival rate, an increase in FTE job numbers across the town and an increased number of business collaborations are expected, these will be confirmed in the Full Business Case following the procurement of an operator for the Hub.

As well as providing greater openness of the Town Hall and access to local democracy, the new space will provide fit-for-purpose, value for money space available for the use of community organisations (e.g. meeting rooms, counselling space, touchdown working space) opening the Town Hall up to the community. New council office space on a much reduced footprint with modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation will provide modern facilities for use by members and staff and is expected to provide greater opportunities for staff to collaborate, improve staff wellbeing, motivation and morale and ultimately provide a better experience for customers and an enhanced ability for the council to recruit and retain high quality staff. This will enable the council's office accommodation footprint to reduce by around 74% reducing the running cost of this accommodation by approximately £300,000 per annum. Additionally there will be less requirement for staff to travel, reducing local congestion and improving the council's carbon footprint whilst new accommodation for members will allow them to meet and engage with residents and the community, improving the council's reputation as a professional organisation.

Financially the proposed future usage of the Town Hall is expected to deliver a saving of £140,000 per annum (averaged across an eight year period). This arises from a number of areas, both increased costs and increased revenues. New staffing to support the longer opening hours of the museum and new bespoke off-site storage for the museum collections which total a revenue growth of £100,000 per year. It is also expected that the Innovation and Incubation Hub will deliver an income to the council of approximately £100,000 per year. There will be building-related savings from the decommissioning of Benskin House and income from space in the Town Hall not used by the council for direct purposes being rented to third parties. Additionally the proposed refurbishment will remove the need for an approximate £6m backlog maintenance programme at both the Town Hall and Benskin House.

Two procurement processes will be undertaken in order to deliver the project. The first of these, commencing in August 2022, will be for a two stage Design and Build contract for the delivery of the refurbishment. This route, which takes into account the council's objectives, risk appetite and wider constraints and dependencies offers the best prospect of programme adherence and transfers

programme, cost and residual design risk to the contractor. This route also would enable synergies to be explored with the Colosseum refurbishment (see Appendix 1), which would provide time and cost efficiencies to the council. The second procurement relates to securing an operator for the Innovation and Incubation Hub. The council does not have the capacity or capability to manage the operation of a hub directly. Therefore the proposal is to go to the market to procure an operator. The exact nature of any commercial terms would need to be established; however, the model that appears to have the most alignment to the council's requirements is the operator management fee arrangement, whereby the council would keep control of the building and enter into a contract with a suitably experienced operator who would deliver the services in the hub and be managed by the council on the basis of the KPIs set and agreed at the outset. Furthermore, the soft market testing exercise received three submissions, all experienced operators of innovation hubs. All expressed an interest in the proposition, including the location of Watford itself and the Town Hall, and all believed that they could operate a profitable operation for both themselves and the council in this context.

It is expected that the Town Hall refurbishment will be completed in May 2024 allowing the council staff to move back in from their temporary accommodation on the top two floors of the Annexe. The Innovation and Incubation Hub and Museum fit out work would then commence with the Hub opening in summer 2024 and the Museum ready to open in May 2025.

The project will be managed via a dedicated Project Board reporting into the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board, chaired by the Managing Director. This will allow risks, issues and any potential changes to be actively managed and, where necessary, escalated with a full understanding of any implications. Political oversight will be maintained by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor and in place since the initiation of the programme, which will continue to allow ongoing progress reporting and feedback from Members.

For the reasons outlined above, the refurbishment of the Town Hall is recommended to Cabinet for approval.

2. Strategic Case

2.1 Background

The Town Hall is a 1930s civic building situated at the northern end of Watford High Street and currently the main offices of Watford Borough Council. Significant refurbishment of the Town Hall building is required which will allow continued use of the facility in the longer term as well as protection of this important heritage building within the town. Given that the building is manifestly under-utilised, even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the refurbishment of the building will provide an opportunity for it to be used for additional purposes, utilising the space fully and complementing the rest of the Town Hall Quarter vision to revitalise this part of the town centre. The layout and heritage nature of the building makes it challenging to develop and previous ideas to use the space for other purposes were found to be commercially unviable. As a result, it is incumbent on the council to renovate and repurpose the building itself to maximise its use to provide enhanced value to the council and people of Watford.

This business case therefore pulls together a number of different projects from within the Town Hall Quarter programme to establish the best use of space within the Town Hall, ensuring that the associated refurbishment of the building meets the requirements of those who will be using it, including not just the council but also Watford Museum and the proposed Innovation and Incubation Hub, as the building is opened up more widely for the community. As such, this business case has been informed by the developing RIBA Stage 2 report, which sets out the future use of the building and the renovation works required to provide assurance in relation to the expected costs. This business case is a culmination of an intensive period of work for the programme team and brings together into one single document, associated business cases assessing the feasibility of an Innovation and Incubation Hub and the future of Watford Museum. These documents are provided as appendices for reference.

2.2 Context for Change

2.2.1 Town Hall Background

The Town Hall is situated at the heart of the quarter it has given its name to and represents the physical location for other projects within the programme. The Town Hall currently houses the council offices, with two (of the four) floors of the Annexe building, to the rear of the main Town Hall building, rented to the NHS as a sexual health clinic and the BBC as the home of the BBC Concert Orchestra. At the current time, part of the ground floor of the Town Hall building is being used by the NHS as a Covid-19 vaccination clinic. Council staff have not worked wholesale from the Town Hall since the beginning of the pandemic (although face to face committee meetings resumed in May 2021) and even prior to Covid-19, the building was manifestly underutilised. Combined with the need for the building to be refurbished, this has provided an ideal opportunity to fundamentally review the use of the Town Hall.

2.2.2 Context for Change

- The Town Hall requires significant investment to prevent a further decline into disrepair. It is a 1930s heritage building that is costly to run and maintain. Refurbishing the building will ensure that the council can focus its budget on priorities to best deliver services to our residents, businesses and community in the context of a challenging financial environment.
- The council has also successfully bid for a £3.7m grant from central government to decarbonise both the Town Hall and Colosseum. This will allow the council to make a significant contribution towards its commitment to hit a target of net carbon neutral by 2030, decarbonising both

buildings as part of the overall refurbishment, whilst doing this in a way which respects the heritage, age and listed status of the buildings.

- Even before the pandemic, the council were not fully utilising the entirety of the Town Hall building as a result of a reducing staff over the past decade and some pockets of more flexible working within the organisation. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated this trend with the majority of council staff having worked from home since March 2020. As outlined, in 2.5 below, staff and member feedback has indicated a desire for the retention of a physical base for the council but predominantly for collaborative working, significantly reducing the amount of floor space required. This frees up the Town Hall for other uses.
- Over the past 12 months, the council has been able to support the Covid-19 vaccine roll out by working with the NHS and opening the building up to the community as a vaccine centre. Many residents have visited the Town Hall for the first time and the freeing up of space as a result of the changes to the way in which the council operates provides an opportunity to open up the Town Hall to our community over the longer term.
- The number of online customer transactions with the council has increased to over 80% in the last 12 months. The customer need and subsequent space requirements for our Customer Service Centre has therefore changed significantly. There is no intention to remove face to face customer services, which remains important for many of our residents, particularly the more vulnerable in our community, but this significant change provides an opportunity to revisit the space requirements without impacting service delivery.
- The Colosseum is also in need of refurbishment as the council look to attract a commercial operator in the wake of the pandemic. Works to the Colosseum are scheduled to be completed by autumn 2023 and provide an opportunity to relink the two buildings.

2.3 Watford Museum

2.3.1 Background

Watford Museum has been based in Benskin House on the Lower High Street since 1981. Since then, the collection has increased from around 900 to c.35,000 individual objects. Since opening, it has developed a strong reputation for partnership working, community collaboration and engagement.

However, the current building is no longer fit-for-purpose and some exhibitions are outdated and have not been upgraded for nearly 20 years. The Town Hall refurbishment provides an opportunity to relocate the museum into the Town Hall, as part of the Town Hall Quarter, and enable it to sit at the heart of Watford's cultural offer. This is a significant opportunity that will enable the museum and heritage service to engage with, and be accessible to, a wider audience both locally and regionally. This will ensure that the museum continues to underpin the wider heritage service and act as a hub for the heritage and cultural offer within the town. The proposed relocation will provide the opportunity for the heritage service to develop new and engaging exhibitions which showcase more of the museum collections and tell the story of Watford both past and present.

Importantly, the proposed relocation will align with, and support a number of, emerging trends including improving health and wellbeing amongst local communities and residents, developing skills and opportunities, supporting town centre growth and development, improving access to heritage and more widely conserving and retaining the borough's important local history collections.

The proposed relocation will support, and be supported by, local development initiatives and add value to the existing visitor and tourism offer available within the Borough and County. The museum

and heritage service will work with and support Watford's diverse communities which have helped to shape the town that is present today and which will continue to develop in the future. The offer at the museum will expand beyond the permanent exhibition galleries to a changing programme of temporary exhibitions, an education and community programme, a programme of outreach and onsite activities, retail provision showcasing local producers and spaces which can be hired by the local community for a range of events and activities. It is expected that it will increase visitors to the museum to 25,000 per annum, create an additional 2.2 FTE jobs and support 50 volunteers. The Outline Business Case for the Museum can be seen at Appendix C.

2.3.2 Context for Change

- Condition Surveys for Benskin House, the Museum's current home, were undertaken in 2015, and updated in 2018, and identify a range of defects that need to be addressed in the short-term, with further items needing to be addressed in the next 3-5 years. To date, few of the identified actions have been completed. The cost of this maintenance work over the next years would be £2.1 million. Valuation work on the Museum has indicated that the council could expect a capital receipt of somewhere between £300,000 and £900,000 for the sale of Benskin House subject to the future usage of the building with the expected sale price reflecting the significant level of refurbishment required to deliver this future usage.
- Accessibility into, and around, the existing building is limited. The main entrance is not accessible to wheelchair users, complex internal door arrangements make access to lifts and stairs difficult and uneven floors and secondary staircases provide additional barriers. Some of these limitations will be hard to overcome even with capital investment due to the building's listing and is at odds with the council's inclusive values and ambition to provide access to local heritage and history to as many people as possible within the town.
- Storage of the existing collection is spread throughout the museum, including in offices. The majority is stored in the basement where there is a lack of proper storage furniture, which has resulted in overcrowding and means that physically working with the collection is very difficult. The environmental conditions in the basement are also problematic, with some rooms suffering from mould ingress.
- The existing Museum lacks a clear narrative focus, making it difficult for visitors to appreciate highlighted objects and focus on what makes Watford unique. As a result, the thematic arrangement of displays within the gallery spaces can be considered incongruous at times and the spatial balance of the thematic arrangement appears disproportionate in certain instances.
- Displays offer very little flexibility for updateability, preventing the Museum from rotating its extensive collection and integrating community perspectives via its partnership programme. Existing displays also have limited interactivity with very little to engage a younger audience.
- The location of Benskin House means that there is very little passing footfall; even when people do 'pass by' the Museum may not be open due to the limited opening hours. As a result, visitor numbers to the Museum are low compared to similar local museums and public consultation identified that many local people do not know the museum exists or feel it is for them.
- As a free admission site, income into the museum is limited. The shop offer is very small and does not appeal to all visitors, the charging policy on spaces is minimal and activities tend to be free of charge. As a result, the financial support provided to the Museum is significant with opportunities to mitigate this burden unable to be taken advantage of.

- Throughout the pandemic, Watford has seen a huge outpouring of community spirit with over 1,000 volunteers supporting the most vulnerable in our community through our Watford Together initiative. Creating a larger and more bustling Museum, open for longer hours, will provide an opportunity to work with the huge volunteer base that has been built up through Covid-19.

2.4 Innovation and Incubation Hub

2.4.1 Background

An Innovation and Incubation Hub is a facility to support a range of innovative businesses with potential to grow. As well as providing accommodation, it offers numerous support services, such as access to equipment, business networking, business guidance, training, mentoring, investment and funding opportunities. It typically offers a structured growth pathway for businesses, through a range of packages, resulting in newly created businesses moving onto their own accommodation as they expand, making way for newcomers to start their journey. It also promotes 'clustering' of businesses in a specific sector to stimulate further benefits. Revenues are generated from these packages and also from additional offers including rental of meeting room space and cafes.

An Innovation and Incubation Hub is one way that the council can support local businesses and the local economy following Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns. Multiple lockdowns as a result of the pandemic have not only meant many businesses have been unable to operate but have also led to a change in the way in which people work, with knock-on impacts. Watford is not alone in needing to support its local economy following the pandemic, but it does have particular challenges as it emerges from it. As a result, there is a need to use the scarce resources available as effectively as possible to re-build the local economy in a sustainable way after the pandemic. There are a number of issues that urgently need to be addressed, outlined in section 2.4.2, which can be achieved through the implementation of an Innovation and Incubation Hub with the space in the refurbished Town Hall and adjacent Annexe building providing a home for the facility. The Outline Business Case for the Innovation and Incubation Hub business case can be seen at Appendix 2C.

2.4.2 Context for Change

- Watford has a low employment rate and rising unemployment (as demonstrated by the increase in claimant rates which increased by 4.4% between March 2020 and 2021) which has been exacerbated by Covid-19. The employment rate of the working age population in Watford remains low at 72.6%. In response to the pandemic, the council has provided unprecedented support for local businesses and our Economic Growth Strategy sets out the longer term plan for supporting people with new skills and into work. An Innovation and Incubation Hub provides a practical way to deploy this support. .
- Whilst Watford benefits from a young and ethnically diverse population today, it is forecast to have a decline in younger age demographics and an increase in the 65 and over population in coming years. Between 2021 and 2043 the population aged 0-15 years old is forecast to reduce by 12.0% compared to a reduction of 2.7% regionally and 2.1% nationally. It is therefore of critical importance that the council supports proposed interventions, such as an Innovation and Incubation Hub, to retain and attract this younger demographic.
- Watford businesses, in particular small businesses, experience high barriers to entry, including in establishing their own premises and growing to the size where they can support employment growth in the area e.g. technology infrastructure (podcast suites, laser cutters etc) can be prohibitively expensive to rent or buy. Such facilities are currently very limited locally and this is hampering business innovation.

- Market analysis has also been conducted by external consultants which has indicated that there is demand for such a facility within Watford. The council has also undertaken some high level research with the support of an experienced economic development analyst. This has included a range of interviews with stakeholders and operators. One of these initiatives was an online survey of local small businesses. This showed that there is an appetite for support, ranging from financing to practical business advice and mentoring, combined with a desire to network.
- Watford has had a more significant reliance on the retail sector than many other towns, with a large shopping offer centred on the Atria Centre. This was already in decline before the pandemic. The two anchor stores, John Lewis and Debenhams, have gone and some head office functions linked to retail (e.g. Mothercare) have closed. In parallel, Watford's theatres, cultural and creative activities and the whole of the hospitality sector have borne the brunt of the substantial economic shock.
- Whilst it is convenient for those in the capital to travel out to Watford, it has difficulty in attracting inward investment because the pull of London is so great.

2.5 Reimagining Watford

2.5.1 Background

Since March 2020, the vast majority of council staff have been working from home as per government guidance. More recently, advice to continue working from home has continued to allow for the decarbonisation works to take place within the Town Hall, although some space is available for both staff and members on the ground floor of the Town Hall and at a number of other sites within the borough, including Wiggenshall Depot, Cassiobury Hub and Cheslyn House. Fortunately, the council had already invested in personal IT kit and unified communications for all staff meaning that the practical transition to working from home was not as formidable as it once would have been. This prolonged period of working from home, along with feedback from our staff, changes to the way in which businesses are choosing to operate and the changing behaviour of our customers, has provided an ideal opportunity to review the way in which the council operates, where our staff and members work from and the space needed to deliver the very best service to customers. From June 2022 the council will use a temporary space on the top two floors of the Annexe building, situated to the rear of the main Town Hall. This space will be designed in consultation with staff and members and be primarily for collaborative working, recognising the significant reduction in the floor area needed for the council to operate.

2.5.2 Context for Change

- Engagement with staff, including our Staff Ambassadors' Group, has indicated that the vast majority of staff have preferred working from home over the last 18 months, with the transition not being as difficult as many had predicted. A better work life balance, an increase in productivity and the more agile approach have been quoted as reasons for this. We have an opportunity to implement a new way of working, which will reduce the cost of council accommodation, before staff return to the office.
- Some staff have, however, found working from home difficult and isolating. There have also been many examples of collaborative work that is not as productive when undertaken remotely and challenges for onboarding new members of staff, who would previously have been able to learn through 'osmosis' by being present in the Town Hall with colleagues. Staff have indicated that having space to collaborate and network with colleagues in the future would be of benefit but that working from home is better suited to 'quiet' work such as report writing, correspondence

and telephone calls. The overwhelming preference is for a hybrid working solution to be adopted moving forwards, which is in line with many other organisations in both the private and public sectors. This approach will balance the varying needs of staff, developing refreshed council values and behaviours and using these to shape the way we work, including our agile principles, to inform our future accommodation needs and, importantly in the context of the Town Hall, the amount of space required.

- Some services continue to operate from satellite sites. This includes the Community Protection team, made up of almost 40 officers, who are based at Wiggshall Depot. This represents a significant proportion of the 230 strong council workforce and Reimagining Watford provides an opportunity to reunite the council, promoting shared values and behaviours and collaborative working across service areas, although the project will also allow for staff to work where they can best serve residents, including at other locations such as the Cassiobury Hub and North Watford Cemetery.
- Even before the pandemic, the Town Hall space itself was manifestly underutilised following a significant reduction in staff numbers over the past decade. The 1930s design of the building, with small offices and a lack of fit for purpose meeting space, does not lend itself to collaborative working.
- In order to continue providing excellent services to residents, businesses and our community, as well as delivering our ambitious programme of capital projects, there is a need for us to attract and retain excellent staff. Candidates are commonly attracted by the prospect of a more agile approach to work and fit-for-purpose, modern offices.

2.6 Key implications of not undertaking the project

The previous sections of this report represent a compelling driver for change. To help assess the drivers, opportunities and risks in undertaking the project, a SWOT analysis has been undertaken and is included below for reference:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage buildings with high profile • A high profile scheme that is attracting experienced developers • Watford is attractive as a place to live, work and for leisure activities • The Council has experience of commercial projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market failure means that the Council must act if the THQ buildings are to be preserved • Funding streams are not defined / guaranteed • Costs and time already invested are high and will rise further therefore need to demonstrate value for money • Site is in a conservation area which limits the potential to develop as needed
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the heritage buildings to provide long term sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new neighbourhoods project is stalled or stopped thus impacting the rest of the programme

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased utilisation of buildings for a wider variety of uses • Create something innovative that will open up the buildings to a wider group of people and activities • Further grant funding opportunities to support the financing of the programme • Generate jobs • Collaboration with businesses to strengthen the town's attractiveness (e.g. Warner Bros) • Create town centre housing to help revitalise the town • Create an improved public realm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme requires further funding from the Council • The I&I Hub is not viable and cannot be implemented • A suitable operator cannot be found for the I&I Hub • A suitable operator cannot be found for the Colosseum • Political changes result in a change of direction
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Work to date has confirmed that to do nothing is not a viable option for the council (see 3.1 of this report for further details). In summary, the key implications of not proceeding with the programme are outlined below:

- **Town Hall** – if the Town Hall refurbishment works do not take place, the opportunity to enhance and increase the usage of the space will be lost. The Town Hall, situated within a prime location with the town centre, will continue to be underutilised and not opened up to the community. Some capital expenditure will be necessary to ensure that the building can continue to be operational, even if only urgent and necessary maintenance work is undertaken. Further revenue expenditure for maintenance would then be required in the coming years.
- **Museum** – if the Museum is not moved to the Town Hall, it would require £2.1m spending on maintenance over the next 10 years or a £3.1m capital investment to bring it up to the required standard. The opportunity to provide a much better and more accessible experience to visitors, bringing more people to our town centre and from the neighbouring Colosseum building, will also be lost.
- **Innovation and Incubation Hub** – if the Innovation and Incubation Hub is not implemented, the council will require a different way to help implement the Economic Growth Strategy to address some of the economic imbalances identified to support local businesses and the local economy following the shock of Covid-19. Furthermore, the Town Hall and Annexe space currently allocated for use by the Innovation and Incubation Hub would remain unoccupied and require the council to pursue a different option, such as renting out the space commercially which may not be straightforward.
- **Reimagining Watford** – if we do not proceed with the implementation of agile working, we will lose the opportunity to make the best use of the Town Hall building, harness the new ways of working which staff have told us have helped them to work more productively and will be unable to retain our position as an employer of choice, helping us to recruit and retain top talent.

2.7 Project objectives

- Implement refurbishments to provide the Town Hall building with a 35-40 year life expectancy
- Implement refurbishments to provide the Annexe building with a minimum 10 year life expectancy

- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Town Hall building meets the requirements for the Museum and Heritage service fit out, allowing the Museum to move from its current home in Benskin House to the Town Hall
- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Town Hall building meets the longer term requirements for the council staff and member fit out
- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Town Hall building provides an opportunity for opening up the space for the community
- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Town Hall and Annexe buildings meets the requirements of an Innovation and Incubation Hub
- Ensure retention of the council chamber and provision of fit for purpose space for other democratic purposes
- Ensure the requirements for the buildings to meet modern standards, including in relation to accessibility and compliance
- Ensure that the buildings are energy efficient and have integrated sustainability features
- Ensure that the Town Hall provides value for money in terms of ongoing operating and maintenance costs
- Ensure that the refurbishment of the Annexe building meets the short to medium term requirements for the council staff and member fit out, whilst meeting the requirements for commercial rent / Innovation and Incubation Hub.
- To interlink and join up the use of the Town Hall and Colosseum buildings as appropriate to their operation
- Ensure that the refurbishment is in keeping with the heritage of the building
- Ensure that the Town Hall works well with the improved public realm spaces introduced through the New Neighbourhood project.

2.8 Dependencies

Work to date has identified the following dependencies which will require management throughout the next phase of the programme:

- The delivery of the programme, as outlined in this business case, is dependent on the approval of funding by Full Council.
- The delivery of the programme, as outlined in this business case, is dependent on receiving the expected return on investment as part of the Joint Venture partnership in relation to the New Neighbourhood project.
- The delivery of the interim staff and member accommodation by spring 2022 is dependent on the Town Hall and Annexe building being out of use for the majority of staff between November 2021 and May 2022.
- The Town Hall delivery programme is dependent on the successful completion of the decarbonisation works by March 2022.

- The relocation of the Museum, the implementation of the Innovation and Incubation Hub and the ongoing delivery of council services (and the realisation of benefits associated with them) are dependent on the completion of the Town Hall refurbishment works.
- The successful transition of staff and members into the interim space within the Annexe is dependent on the completion of values and behaviours work and the associated culture change programme to implement agile working.
- If National Lottery Heritage funding (NLHF) is successful it will off-set the additional revenue costs forecast for longer museum opening hours and enhanced activity programme. Should NLHF funding not be forthcoming then the operating model of the museum and heritage service will need to be re-considered.
- The fit out of the museum cannot begin before the outcome of the National Lottery Heritage Funding is finalised.
- Parking for users of the Town Hall is dependent on the total number of spaces allocated within the New Neighbourhood.
- Appointment of an Innovation and Incubation Hub operator may influence the future requirements of the Town Hall and Annexe space.
- The longevity of the existing Annexe space is dependent on the proposals for joint venture partners on the New Neighbourhood.
- The success of the Innovation and Incubation Hub is partly dependent on additional successful grant funding.
- The mix of commercial and community space within the Town Hall is dependent on supply and demand of both uses.
- The successful progression of the programme is dependent on ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders across the individual projects

It should be noted that a full list of dependencies will be captured on the programme dependencies log to be managed by the Programme Manager and overseen by the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board.

2.9 Constraints

Work to date has identified the following constraints which will require management throughout the next phase of the programme:

- Decarbonisation funding must be spent by the end of the 2021/22 financial year.
- The Town Hall refurbishment must meet the requirements of Historic England as a result of its listed status. This is particularly true of the committee rooms, allocated for use of the Museum on the first floor, whereby both fixtures and fittings are similarly listed, constraining the level and type of exhibition that can be used within these spaces.
- A significant exercise needs to be undertaken by the museum and heritage team to fully understand the collection and prepare it for relocation and removal from Benskin House. Additional resource is being utilised to enable this to take place within the required time frames.

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- The council chamber must be retained for use for council democratic meetings. However, member group rooms and committee rooms will use other, modern and fit-for-purpose facilities within the Town Hall building in the long term and in the Annexe in the short to medium term.
 - In order to maximise the use of space within the Town Hall Quarter; meet the objectives of the programme and deliver the sustainability ambitions for the council there will be a significant reduction in parking across the Town Hall Quarter. The optimum parking provision will be developed through the next phase of the programme in line with the revised requirements of all stakeholders.
 - The viability of the Innovation and Incubation Hub could be constrained by the level of commercial space proposed by joint venture partners elsewhere within the New Neighbourhood.

3. Economic case

3.1 Possible options

The Town Hall refurbishment project has considered a number of options, both regarding the extent and nature of the refurbishment and of the future use of the Town Hall and adjacent Annexe building. Options regarding alternative commercial uses of the Town Hall building, such as for use as a hotel or care home have previously been assessed, but rejected as unviable for a number of reasons. The council therefore needs to take ownership of the delivery and funding of the refurbishment and for identifying how the building should be used in the future.

3.1.1 Refurbishment options

Option	Description	Potential Implications
1. Do nothing	No refurbishment works would be completed and the Town Hall building would continue to be used as is as council offices with a reactive maintenance approach. The top two floors of the Annexe would be commercially let in their current state of repair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option does not deliver any of the objectives of the Town Hall refurbishment project or Town Hall Quarter programme • The Town Hall building would de-grade and would require extensive refurbishment at some point in the near future • Watford Museum would remain in a non-upgraded Benskin House • Commercial-let of the Annexe is likely to be challenging due to the state of repair and facilities within the space



Option	Description	Potential Implications
2. Do minimum	No refurbishment works would be completed and the Town Hall building would continue to be used as council offices; however work would be undertaken to complete backlog maintenance work to ensure the building is able to function for the next ten years. The top two floors of the Annexe would be commercially let in their current state of repair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option does not deliver any of the desired non-financial outcomes of the Town Hall Quarter programme • Option does not increase the use of the Town Hall building • Watford Museum would remain at Benskin House • Commercial-let of the Annexe is likely to be challenging due to the state of repair and facilities within the space • Option would require approximately £6m capital spend to complete the required works at the Town Hall and Benskin House
3. Building refurbishment	The Town Hall and Annexe ¹ buildings will be extensively refurbished to upgrade the buildings' fabric and diversify their use to increase utilisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option delivers increased use of the Town Hall building and Annexe providing fit-for-purpose space for the Museum, community-use, council offices and Innovation and Incubation Hub • Benskin House would be surplus and would provide a capital receipt • Operational building costs are affordable and within existing budgets. With the expectation of financial savings through contributions to these costs from “service charge” to building users providing an income stream. • Capital costs of £9.5m are assessed to be affordable with the funding available

¹ Top two floors and common parts



Option	Description	Potential Implications
4. Building refurbishment plus extension	The Town Hall and Annexe ² buildings will be extensively refurbished to upgrade the buildings' fabric and diversify their use to increase utilisation. Additionally an extension would be built on the Town Hall to increase the space available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option delivers increased use of the Town Hall building and Annexe providing fit-for-purpose space for the Museum, community-use, council offices and Innovation and Incubation Hub • Benskin House would be surplus and would provide a capital receipt • Operational building costs would increase and are not covered within existing budgets. If the expected use of the building extension was met this would cover these increased costs and would deliver financial savings; however, there is a financial risk to the council if this was not successful with a potential increased financial liability of in the region of £150,000 per annum. • Capital costs of between £12m and £15m are assessed to be unaffordable with the funding available

From the description of the options and the potential implications of each option 1 and 2 are not viable if the council is to deliver its objectives for the Town Hall.

Options 3 and 4 are similar and both enable the council to fulfil its objectives for the future use of the buildings and provide space for the Museum, community-use, council offices and Innovation and Incubation Hub. Critically however the capital costs mean that option 4 is not affordable with the funding currently available and additionally option 4 provides an increased financial liability if the future uses of the building did not materialise and deliver financially as expected. Option 3 is therefore the recommended option as this will enable the council's objectives for the Town Hall to be delivered, can be delivered within the available capital funding, will not add any revenue pressure to the council's budget and will not increase the council's financial risk.

² Top two floors and common parts

3.1.2 Future Building use

Through the Town Hall Quarter programme the council's objectives are to deliver increased usage of the Town Hall and Annexe with a particular focus on providing space for:

- Watford Museum and Heritage Service
- Council office accommodation
- Community use
- Innovation and Incubation Hub

A range of options were explored through the development of designs for the refurbishment through the RIBA Stage 1 designs considering these uses from a design, financial and deliverability perspective. The recommended option from these RIBA Stage 1 designs that is being progressed through to RIBA Stage 2 and on which this outline business case has been developed includes the following key design features / uses:

1. Museum galleries located within the curved front of the Town Hall building with additional museum accommodation in the basement, ground and first floors
2. Chamber retained as-is, but utilised for museum tours
3. New accessible and visible large meeting room with modern facilities on the ground floor for council meetings (e.g. Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny)
4. Mayor's office and Chairman's parlour retained, but utilised as multi-functional meeting spaces for Members in addition to museum tours
5. Community engagement space (café, meeting rooms etc) on the Town Hall ground floor
6. Council offices accommodated on the top floor of the Town Hall
7. Town Hall middle floor adjacent to Colosseum re-purposed as offices for the Colosseum operator
8. Town Hall middle floor generic office type accommodation
9. Annexe – ground, 2nd and 3rd floors – Innovation and Incubation Hub. If the Hub is deemed successful during the initial years then there would be potential to expand into floor 1 when the lease with HCC for the NHS expires (in 2031) and space on the first floor of the Town Hall.

3.2 Project benefits

The refurbishment of the Town Hall and Annexe buildings at an estimated cost of £9.5m to enable the usage as described in section 3.1.2 will, subject to the successful delivery of the individual projects associated with these usages, deliver significant benefits. Additionally the refurbishment will deliver significant benefits to the buildings that will reduce the cost of their operation, enhance their sustainability and protect and enhance the heritage elements of the Town Hall.

3.2.1 Non-financial benefits

3.2.1.1 Innovation and Incubation Hub

The implementation of an Innovation and Incubation Hub in the Annexe building is expected to be instrumental in:

- Supporting small and medium enterprises across the region to become established businesses, boosting employment through support packages and providing sector growth through occupants 'clustering' in one place
- Providing a diverse, vibrant cultural offering which is attractive to young people
- Creating a dynamic, vibrant, inspiring location for residents to work and socialise, reducing the need to commute away or leave Watford. This will help respond to challenges identified above around diversifying the town centre, increasing footfall and reducing deprivation
- Creating higher value direct job and indirect local supply chain employment contributing to the economy
- Breathing new life into the Town Hall Quarter as part of its regeneration through provision of a flexible space for businesses to grow

The quantifiable benefits that the Hub is expected to deliver are:

- Every two years supporting the "graduation" of 60 people / 20 businesses from the Hub
- Every two years enabling six businesses to successfully transition from being micro to small

Additionally the Hub is expected to deliver the following benefits, which are currently unquantified, but which will be confirmed in the Full Business Case following the procurement of a new operator:

- Increased close business collaborations
- Increased number of patent applications
- Increase in footfall in the town centre
- Increase in FTE job numbers in Watford
- Increase in business survival rate

3.2.1.2 Museum

The relocation of the museum and heritage service to the Town Hall and making it a part of the wider Town Hall Quarter will significantly enhance the museum offer and attract more visitors. Whilst the museum and heritage service will not generate significant income, as it will be retained as a free to enter museum, it will benefit from shared services and increased visibility which will in turn support wider economic and social benefits within the town.

Re-locating Watford Museum to a refurbished space within the Town Hall creates the opportunity to create a new and improved museum and heritage offer which is fully accessible, both physically and intellectually. This will enable the heritage service to showcase a greater amount of its collections and through these objects tell the story of how the town of Watford has been shaped by its rich industrial and social heritage. The ability to have more flexible space within the museum increases the opportunities for partnership working to create a programme of changing exhibitions, events and activities which appeal to a diverse range of audiences.

The re-located and re-imagined museum is expected to deliver the following quantifiable benefits:

- 150% Increase in visitor numbers from 10,000 to 25,000 per annum
- Increased employment within the Town (direct and induced) from 4.6 FTE to 9 FTE
- 200% increase in volunteer hours (2,500 – 7,500 per annum) with an increase in volunteer numbers from 15 to 50

Additionally the museum and associated activities in the new space are expected to support the delivery of the following non-quantifiable benefits, which will be significantly enhanced from the current museum offer:

- Value of culture and heritage – there is much research into the value of heritage and culture to both individual's and society. The museum provides opportunities to access and participate in heritage and culture activities which are recognised to have a positive impact on people's health and well-being, contribute to community cohesion and making communities feel safer and stronger, reduce social exclusion and isolation and much more.³
- Increased economic impact from the museum to the town from £104k to £380k per annum
- Provision of opportunities for skills development and adult learning
- Delivery of an education programme for young people and children

3.2.1.3 Community space

The refurbishment of the Town Hall will open up the Town Hall to our community through the provision of a range of spaces that will be available to both residents and community groups. This will provide the following benefits:

- Greater openness of the Town Hall providing greater transparency and access to local democracy
- Fit-for-purpose, value for money space available for the use of community organisations (e.g. meeting rooms, counselling space, touchdown working space)

3.2.1.4 Elected Members and council staff

A new council office space with modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation incorporating modern facilities for use by members and staff is expected to deliver the following benefits:

- Improved staff well-being
- Improved staff motivation and morale
- Greater opportunities to collaborate
- Less requirement for staff to travel, reducing local congestion and improving the council's carbon footprint
- Work space better aligned to council culture
- Improved accommodation for members to meet and engage with residents and the community, improving the council's reputation as a professional organisation
- Enhance the council's ability to recruit and retain high quality staff
- Enhanced space for democratic meetings improving the delivery and access to local democracy for residents and businesses
- Historic council chamber at the heart of the Town Hall retained for meetings of Council and other significant civic events

³ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/exploring-value-arts-and-culture/value-arts-and-culture-people-and-society#>

3.2.2 Financial Benefits

There are a number of ways to assess the financial benefits / implications of the proposed refurbishment of the Town Hall and Annexe and the new usage of these buildings as described in section 3.1.2.

At a high-level, based on the assumptions made across all of the different component business cases and averaged across an eight year period⁴ the proposed future usage of the Town Hall is expected to deliver a financial benefit of £140,000 per annum.

This is made up of a number of components, some of which require investment from the council to deliver a new or improved service and in other areas there are savings. The detail and assumptions behind the key elements of this are set out below.

1. Museum operational cost increase

To deliver the enhanced museum and heritage offer and associated benefits within the refurbished Town Hall there is an anticipated net increase in costs of the museum operation as set out in the table below. The two largest components of the **£100k** increase are £50k for off-site storage costs and £50k for new staffing to reflect longer opening hours of the museum. There is additionally included a significant uplift in income generated through higher retail sales to an increased number of visitors and increased income through hire and programmes.

Item	As-is / £k	Future / £k	Difference / £k
Operating costs	130	302	172
Income	-6	-78	-72
Total	124	224	100

2. Costs of Innovation and Incubation Hub

The Innovation and Incubation Hub is a new initiative for the council and based on the assumptions made in the Outline Business Case (see Appendix 2C). Prior to procuring a new operator it is assumed that this will generate revenues to the Council of approximately **£100k** per year (average cost across the first eight years of operation).

3. Income from non-council operational use of the space

The financial model for the business case assumes that all space not used by the council for direct purposes (i.e. office accommodation and the museum) will be occupied / utilised by third parties and income will be generated for their use of this space. This income will be from a mixture of rent, service charge and hires.

Item	As-is / £k	Future / £k	Difference / £k
Annexe income	-300	-250	50
Town Hall income	0	-130	-130
Total	-300	-380	-80

⁴ Eight years have been used as this takes into account the period from the assumed completion of the refurbishment until the end of the current HCC lease on the first floor of the Annexe building. Figures include allowances for inflation across the period.

4. Disposal of Benskin House

With the move of the Museum to the Town Hall Benskin House is assumed to be surplus and therefore it is assumed that costs of operating Benskin House, **£62k** per annum will be saved.

5. Council office accommodation

To enable the future usage of the buildings the council's office accommodation footprint needs to reduce significantly. As a consequence of this, the cost of the space that is used by both staff and members will reduce by approximately **£300k**.

3.2.3 Building benefits

The refurbishment will deliver the following benefits to the Town Hall and Annexe buildings:

Benefit description	Measures
Buildings brought up to modern standards and end-of-life systems replaced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced ongoing repairs and maintenance costs • Reduction in building user complaints • Buildings meet all required building standards (statutory compliance etc) • Increased rental value of any commercial space
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings assessed as accessible in accordance with DDA standards
Enhanced utility efficiency (contributing to the council's net zero carbon sustainability target ⁵)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced electricity consumption • Reduced gas consumption • Reduced water consumption • Reduced carbon footprint of the buildings
Preserved heritage asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Town Hall asset is maintained in accordance with the council's legal obligations
A single hub of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use of facilities, such as meeting rooms and café and subsequent reduced cost of maintenance

3.3 Key Assumptions

There are a number of key assumptions that are critical to understand when considering the financial. These are discussed below with more detailed assumptions in Appendix 2A.

1. Town Hall and Annexe operational building costs. These are assumed to be the same in the future as they are currently. This is likely to be incorrect; however there are a number of factors that will effect these costs, both increasing and decreasing, which it is not yet possible to model. Examples of these are as a potential increase in business rates due to an improvement in the quality of the space, moving from a reactive repairs to a planned preventive maintenance approach and

⁵ Benefit enabled by both the Refurbishment and PSDS projects

introducing decarbonisation measures to reduce the utility costs of the buildings. It is not possible to calculate the future building costs at this point in the project as they will be dependent on the designs, which are still not sufficiently developed. An updated building operations budget will be included within the Full Business Case.

2. The museum income of £78,000 per annum is predicated on an assumed 25,000 visitors per annum with £1.50 retail spend each and increased income through hire and paid for programmes and activities. These assumptions are based on a sound rationale and benchmarking; however any over estimation would lead to a reduction in this income.
3. Innovation and Incubation Hub income per annum is predicated on an assumed 1,650 m² size of hub, occupying space both in the Annexe and Town Hall. The results of the soft market testing (based on returns from three experienced operators who have assessed the proposition) indicate that a profit to the Council is achievable. The net revenue to the Council is estimated to be in the region of £100,000 per annum.
4. Town Hall income assumed as hire charges from community groups etc that will be set at a rate to cover the building costs.

4. Commercial case

4.1 Town Hall Refurbishment

To deliver the Town Hall Refurbishment the council have a contract with Mace Consult Limited to provide Lead Consultant, Multi-disciplinary Design and Project Management services. They have been working with Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios who are providing Architectural Services for both the Town Hall and Colosseum Refurbishment project. The consultant team, along with Watford Borough Council officers, have worked through to the development of RIBA Stage 2 designs.

They have completed work to develop a procurement and delivery route for the refurbishment, which takes into account the council's objectives, risk appetite and wider constraints and dependencies. This recommends that the council follows a two-stage Design and Build route for the delivery of the refurbishment as this better satisfies the council's criteria than a traditional route. This route offers the best prospect of programme adherence and transfers programme, cost and residual design to the contractor. This route also would enable synergies to be explored with the Colosseum construction activity, which is advanced compared to the Town Hall, and which would provide time and cost efficiencies to the council.

The detailed procurement strategy and approach has not yet been developed; however it is anticipated that the council will commence the process in August 2022 and competitively tender the contract from an established framework to which the council has access. This approach de-risks the process as the framework has already established terms and conditions and competitively tendered rates and has an agreed set of available companies who capable and are likely to submit bids. The approach can also be completed faster than an open / restricted process.

4.2 Innovation and Incubation Hub

4.2.1 Soft Market Testing

The soft market testing exercise received three submissions, all experienced operators of innovation hubs. All expressed an interest in the proposition, including the location of Watford itself and the Town Hall. They also agreed with the chosen sectors. All believed that they could operate a profitable operation for both themselves and the Council in this context. The respondents confirmed the proposed area of 1,650m² was adequate for an Innovation Hub. The preference for location from two of the three was that the Hub was located in the Town Hall. However, all three would be able to use the Annexe space. All of the potential operators expressed a requirement to be involved in the design development process as early as possible. The three respondents expressed a preference to be engaged by the Council under a management contract. One of the organisations would consider a turnover lease, which they have entered into elsewhere. A range of responses was received regarding the length of the management contract from 3 - 15 years. All respondents have incentive schemes on the hubs they are currently operating, which include both financial and commercial KPIs. This is shown at Appendix 2C2 which is an exempt paper due to commercial sensitivity.

4.2.2 Operator Procurement

There are a number of different delivery options for the running of an Innovation and Incubation Hub. The council does not have the capacity or capability to manage the operation of a hub directly. Therefore the proposal is to go to the market to procure an operator. The exact nature of any commercial terms would need to be established; however, the model that appears to have the most alignment to the council's requirements is the operator management fee arrangement, whereby the

council would keep control of the building and enter into a contract with a suitably experienced operator who would deliver the services in the hub and be managed by the council on the basis of the KPIs set and agreed at the outset.

There will be a period between the completion of a full business case in August 2023, and the opening of the refurbished Town Hall and Annexe buildings in Spring 2024, with the hub expected to be in operation later in 2024. This provides a length of time to prepare for its opening and secure as many funding streams as possible. It will be the responsibility of the chosen operator to begin and pay for the marketing; however, the council should supplement this with marketing initiatives to support the success of the hub in advance. This will include ramping up interest via social media channels, creating a dedicated website and the running of events. The operator, who will be engaged approximately one year in advance of the Hub opening, will be expected to be accountable for this ramping up activity to the council and present their work at board meetings as requested.

5. Financial Case

This section explains the financial implications of the recommended refurbishment option and future Town Hall and Annexe usage both from a revenue and capital perspective. It also outlines how the capital investment will be funded.

5.1 Expenditure and Costing Profile

5.1.1 Revenue case

The table below shows the revenue position over a ten year period for the future operation of the Town Hall with the proposed usage as outlined above. The future usage is expected to deliver a net saving to the council, which, on average across the eight year period from the re-opening of the Town Hall until the end of the current lease on the first floor of the Annexe (in 2032), will be £140,000 per annum.

Revenue impact of future operations	£m									
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Town Hall - operating costs	0.42	0.44	0.45	0.46	0.47	0.48	0.49	0.50	0.52	0.53
Annex - operating costs	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.16	0.16	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.18	0.18
Innovation Hub - operation	-	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.11
Museum Service - operating costs	0.13	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
Benskin House	0.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town Hall Building Income	-	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.14
Annex Building Income	0.11	0.22	0.23	0.24	0.24	0.25	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.14
Total Future Net Revenue position	0.66	0.38	0.38	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.54

Revenue funding within the MTFS										
Revenue Budget - Town Hall and Annexe	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Income Budget - Annexe	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Revenue Budget - Museum (incl Benskin House)	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18
Total Revenue Funding within the MTFS	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53

Net Revenue position										
Total	0.13	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.01

The key assumptions made in this financial model are discussed in section **Error! Reference source not found.** with a detailed set of Assumptions included in Appendix 2A.

5.1.2 Capital expenditure

The Capital costs of the project to deliver the refurbishment of the Town Hall and Annexe and to fit these buildings out to deliver the future usage are set out in the table below.

Item	Cost £m
Town Hall refurbishment	6.30
Annexe refurbishment	1.00
Council office fit-out	0.75
Window refurbishment (PSDS)	1.00
Museum fit-out	1.75
Innovation and Incubation Hub fit-out	0.25

Item	Cost £m
Terrapin demolition	0.50
Total	11.55

5.2 Funding and affordability

The delivery of the project will be funded from a range of sources comprising:

- Existing capital budget
- Benskin House Capital receipt
- Profit share from New Neighbourhoods development
- Capital receipts – non / low income generating and surplus sites
- PWLB borrowing

The funding allocation and affordability has been assessed at a programme, rather than at an individual project level. This is explained in the covering report for Cabinet on 6 December 2021 to which this business case is an appendix.

6. Management case

The scale and nature of the proposed project is recognised and so consideration of how the project will be delivered, managed and governed will be key to its success. As a result, risk management will be key in ensuring that the project is delivered successfully. The process for managing risks is detailed in section 6.2 and key project risks are captured below. A full list of risks will be actively monitored by the council's Project Manager via the project risk log.

6.1 Key Risks

Risk	Cause	Consequence	Risk Score	Action agreed to respond / mitigate / control	Updated Risk Score
Ability to obtain listed building consent	Plans are not agreed by Historic England	Change of design, additional costs and extended timelines	3 x 4 = 12	Engage with Historic England and our internal Conservation Planning Officer as plans are developed	2 x 4 = 8
Cost of building materials and / or labour increase	Global and national supply chain issues	Increase costs, change of design	3 x 4 = 12	Sufficient contingency built into cost plan	2 x 4 = 8
Increase in Covid-19 cases leads to another national lockdown	Change in government guidance	Extended timeline for completion. Unable to complete refurbishment by Spring 2024	2 x 4 = 8	Build allowance into programmes for working in Covid safe environment at all times.	2 x 4 = 8
Stakeholders are not kept informed on progress of the works	Lack of clear communication channels	Disengagement with the project, lack of clarity on when the venue will reopen impacting new launch	3 x 3 = 9	Clear communications plan in place and updates provided to THQ Stakeholder Group and Member Steering Group	2 x 2 = 4

Risk	Cause	Consequence	Risk Score	Action agreed to respond / mitigate / control	Updated Risk Score
Individual project business cases are considered no longer viable	Increase in cost, unanticipated issues, scope creep or programme slippage	Space under utilised in the Town Hall as unable to be filled by space allocated in RIBA s.2 design	3 x 3 = 9	Contingency planning underway in relation to other opportunities / options to use the space.	2 x 3 = 6

6.2 Risk Management

All aspects of the programme will operate in line with the council's Risk Management Strategy 2020. All projects within the programme will have a dedicated risk log in the format circulated by the Programme Manager, which will be consistent with the corporate documentation approved by the EPMO. Project Managers will:

- Be responsible for monitoring on a weekly basis and updating their project risk log as and when risks are identified / assessment changes
- Ensure that any risks identified are mitigated as far as possible and that any action taken to do so is appropriately recorded
- Capture all dependencies as risks highlighting the consequence if the dependency is not delivered as anticipated
- Include an updated risk log in each update report to the Programme Manager, identifying any additions or amendments to the log
- Report back on key project risks at each project board meeting so that any operational changes can be made to mitigate the risk
- Report back on key project risks at each programme team meeting to ensure that these can be considered collaboratively and any interdependencies identified
- Identify whether any project risks require additional action by the programme board or its members to mitigate the risk from being realised

By reporting all project risks in this way, an overview of risks to the programme can be monitored and managed. Risks which may appear minor to an individual project may have the potential to cause significant issues for other projects within the programme should they be realised, hence the importance of maintaining such an overview.

The Programme Manager will subsequently be responsible for the programme risk log which captures any risks that pose a threat to the overall delivery of the programme. The Programme Manager will:

- Be responsible for monitoring and updating the programme risk log so that these can be managed operationally
- Maintain an oversight of all dependencies between projects and external (to the programme) initiatives to ensure that risks are mitigated

- Ensure that any risks identified are mitigated as far as possible and that any action taken to do so is appropriately recorded
- Decide, through the project highlight reports, whether any risk identified by individual projects poses a threat to the delivery of the programme and its ability to meet its objectives within the given timescales. If such risks are identified, the Programme Manager will additionally record these on the programme risk log
- Include an updated programme risk log in the monthly highlight reports to the programme board and Member Steering Group, identifying any additions or amendments to the log
- Report all programme risks to the Programme Board and Member Steering Group at each meeting and highlight key risks

It should be noted that any risks with a current risk score of 9 or above should be escalated to the council's corporate risk register, in line with the council's Risk Management Strategy. Furthermore, sponsors should ensure that the risk of delivery for any project they are sponsoring is captured on their service risk register. The EPMO will be responsible for managing this.

6.3 Outline Arrangements for Change and Contract Management

The Programme Manager will be responsible for preparing highlight reports for the Programme Board. The highlight report will be discussed at the monthly Programme Board meeting and will be provided to the EPMO in accordance with the EPMO schedule. It will be reviewed in detail by the EPMO Assurance Group, who may additionally request attendance of the Programme Manager or constituent Project Managers to undertake a deep dive review of the programme or individual project.

All Project Managers will be required to support the preparation of the highlight report by providing relevant and timely updates to the Programme Manager in the form of individual project highlight reports.

The programme highlight reports, including details of its component projects, will allow an ongoing assessment of any potential variations to the project/programme plan and will outline key risks, issues and interdependencies. Any variations from the agreed plan will be managed in the following way:

Variance	Programme	Project
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Manager, has the authority to amend any sub-milestones in the programme plan providing that the programme end date does not change • Anything impacting on the programme end date will require sign-off via a Change Request by the programme board and, subsequently, the Member Steering Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manager has the authority to amend any sub-milestones in the project plan, providing that the project end date does not change and that any independencies are considered in the event that key milestones are likely to be missed. This must be undertaken in consultation with the Programme Manager who will identify if the variance is likely to impact a dependency elsewhere within the programme. If this is the case, a Change Request to the programme board will be required • Anything impacting on the project end date will require sign off from the project board. This must be undertaken in consultation with the Programme Manager who will identify if the variance is likely to impact a dependency elsewhere within the programme. If this is the case, a Change Request to the programme board will be required
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any variation in the programme's total cost will need to be raised with the programme board initially and will ultimately require sign off by Budget Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contingency should be built into all project budgets and should not be exceeded without a formal change request • Requests for additional funds by projects, drawing down from the programme contingency, will need to be submitted as a change request and can be authorised by the Programme Board, providing that this will not impact the final total programme budget
Quality / benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any anticipated variation in quality / benefits relating to the programme will require approval from the Programme Board through a formal change request. Any variation outside the Programme Sponsor delegated approval remit will be presented to Portfolio Holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any anticipated variation in quality / benefits relating to the project will require approval from the project board through a formal change request, which may require escalation to the Programme Board • The Project Manager will retain responsibility for ensuring that the anticipated final outcome of the project is continually measured against the original anticipated quality / benefits

To assist with the above process, a Town Hall Delivery Group, made up of Sponsors and Project Managers from the Town Hall Refurbishment, Reimagining Watford, Innovation and Incubation Hub and Museum and Heritage projects, will meet on a weekly basis to assess the ongoing delivery of the project and the dependencies between the four projects. This will include monitoring the impact of any proposed design changes on other projects or concerns in relation to the ongoing viability of business cases which will impact other parts of the programme. The Group will be solution focused

and concerned primarily with active issue management and trouble-shooting to ensure that the programme, and its constituent projects, progress as planned.

6.4 Member Steering Group

Since the formal initiation of the Town Hall Quarter programme in January 2021 and throughout the development of the business case, the programme has been overseen by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor. The members of the Member Steering Group can be seen on diagram 2 in section 6.5.1 of this business case.

The Member Steering Group has had an ongoing role in shaping the direction of the programme and its constituent projects, receiving reports for comment relating to:

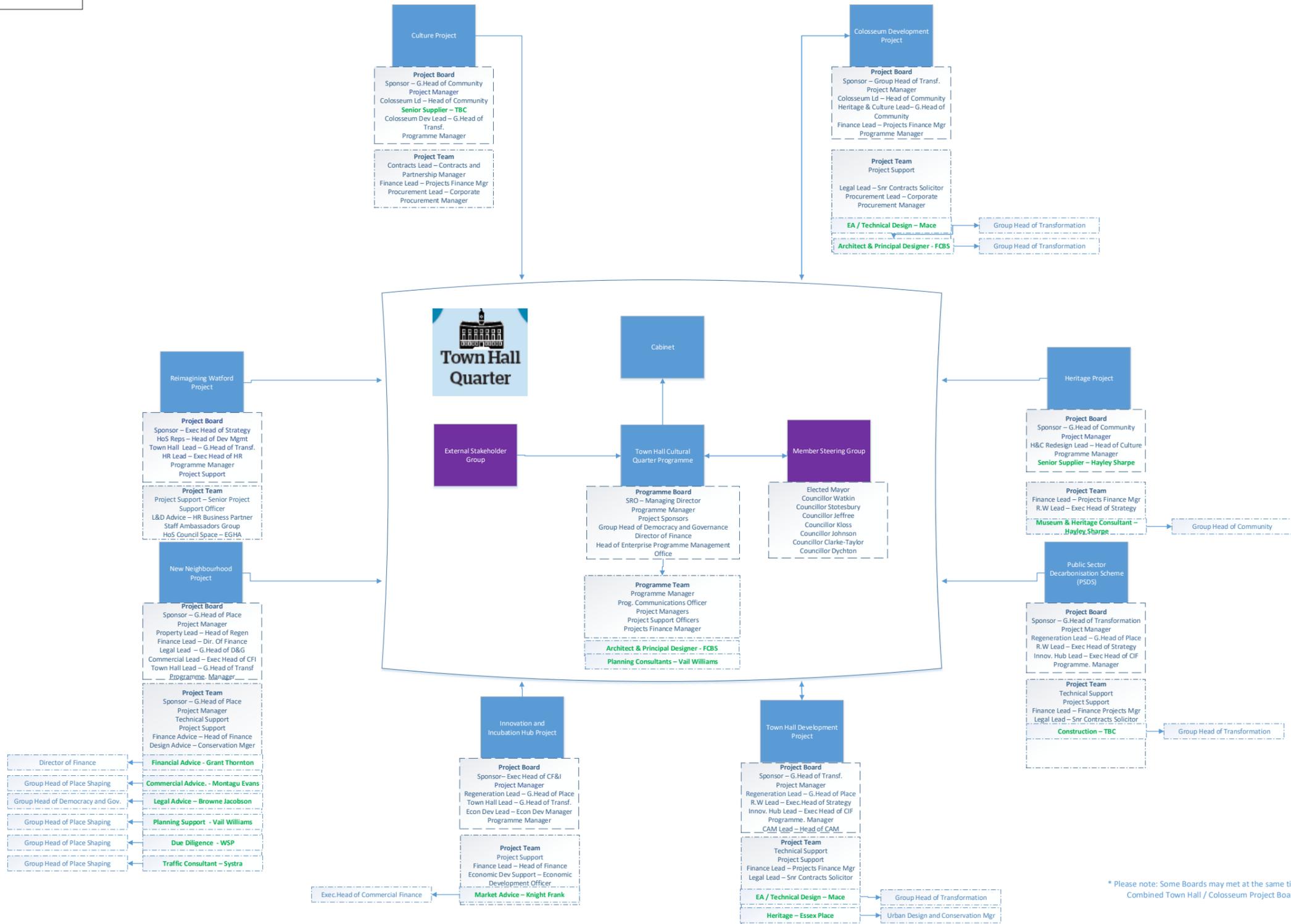
- Performance of the project against Council's corporate objectives
- Performance against declared project objectives
- Programme
- Risks and Issues
- Commercial and financial considerations
- Masterplanning and Design
- Procurement matters
- Project Budgets and Expenditure

This political oversight will continue as, subject to approval of the business case, the programme progresses. As previously, where a report is taken that requires a formal decision, in accordance with the executive scheme of delegation this will be taken by the Mayor after consideration of the views of the Steering Group and having had the benefit of officer advice.

6.5 Programme management arrangements

As part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, the Town Hall project will report into the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board. This will enable programme risks, issues and dependencies to be managed and instil a discipline and consistency across the programme. Full details of these operational arrangements can be seen in the Programme Definition Document

Town Hall Quarter Programme Structure



6.5.1 Programme Board

The Programme Board will meet monthly, with the following responsibilities:

- Provision of overall guidance and direction ensuring the programme remains on track against time, cost and quality requirements
- Internal approval of key deliverables
- Review and approval of the programme plan and any exception plans
- Support and oversight of risk management processes
- Approval of changes
- Resolving strategic and directional issues

6.5.2 Programme Board Membership

The following table details the membership of the Programme Board:

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Managing Director	SRO (Programme Board Chair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous overview of programme viability and delivery • Accountable for the delivery of the overall programme and the achievement of objectives • Decision maker for any delegated approvals
Group Head of Place Shaping	New Neighbourhood Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the New Neighbourhood project • Representative of the New Neighbourhood project at Programme Board level
Group Head of Transformation	Town Hall Development and Colosseum Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Town Hall Development and Colosseum projects • Representative of the Town Hall Development and Colosseum projects at Programme Board level
Executive Head of Strategy and Communications	Reimagining Watford Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Reimagining Watford project • Representative of the Reimagining Watford project at Programme Board level
Group Head of Community and Environmental Services	Culture and Heritage Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Culture and Heritage project • Representative of the Culture and Heritage project at Programme Board level
Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation	Innovation and Incubation Hub Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for the successful delivery of the Innovation and Incubation Hub project • Representative of the Innovation and Incubation project at Programme Board level

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Group Head of Democracy and Governance	Legal Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight and advice relating to all legal aspects of the programme Client management of Legal Advisers
Shared Director of Finance	Finance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight and advice relating to all financial aspects of the programme Client management of Financial Advisers
Head of EPMO	Programme Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the project complies with EPMO and WBC Governance requirements

6.6 Town Hall Project roles and responsibilities

6.6.1 Town Hall Project Board

The Town Hall Project Board will meet on a monthly basis, prior to the Town Hall Quarter Programme Board. Project Boards will be tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Provision of overall guidance and direction ensuring the project remains on track against time, cost and quality requirements
- Discussion and review of key deliverables, submitting any recommendations to the programme board
- Review and approval of the project plan and the recommendation of any exception reports / change requests to the programme board
- Support and oversight of risk management processes

6.6.2 Town Hall Project Board Membership

The following table details the membership of the Project Board:

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Group Head of Transformation	Town Hall Development and Colosseum Project Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable for the successful delivery of the Town Hall Development and Colosseum projects Decision maker for any delegated approvals

Job Title	Programme Role	Responsibilities
Senior Project Manager	Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily, operational management of the project, (resource and budget) Ensuring that the necessary actions to meet the key milestones in the project plan are undertaken by members of the project team Reporting on the progress of the project to the Programme Manager Active management of project risks and issues Client management of EA / Technical Design (Mace) and Architect / Principle Designer (FCBS)
Executive Head of Strategy and Communications	Reimagining Watford Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that staff requirements are understood in relation to the Town Hall Development project, including the impact of these requirements on the space needed at the Town Hall and ensuring that the Town Hall Development project is requirement-led and that the council's transformation ambitions inform the works
Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation	Innovation and Incubation Hub Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that any requirements from the Innovation and Incubation Hub project are aligned with the development of the Town Hall
Group Head of Place Shaping	New Neighbourhood Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the impact of the Regeneration project on the project is understood and aligned
Programme Manager	Programme Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight across the programme, including management of programme level risks, issues and dependencies Development and maintenance of programme timescales and impact on individual projects
Head of Corporate Asset Management	Asset Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and expertise in relation to the Town Hall building, maintenance, compliance and accessibility.

Appendices

Appendix 2A – Detailed financial assumptions

1. As-is costs based on 2020/21 actuals (except where significantly different due to Covid and therefore 2019/20 has been used)
2. Costs for Town Hall and Annexe that cannot be split based on coding have been apportioned based on total area of each. Annexe costs have been apportioned based on the GIA of the individual floors (i.e. ignoring the common parts)
3. Museum costs taken from DEA000 and FKE000 - assumed that all will be "saved" if the building is surplus
4. Future costs have been assumed to be the same as the current costs (i.e. no impact has been modelled for planned works, which are likely to increase costs in some areas and reduce in others, including no account taken of demolition of Terrapin)
5. Areas as per RIBA Stage 1 Option C report for Town Hall, assumed Council use of top two floors of Annexe ongoing, others let on current terms. Allocation for Town Hall ignores common parts e.g. plant space etc
6. Annexe Service charge income assumed
7. Community space will be hired at a rate that will cover the Service Charge cost
8. IIH space will be charged at a rate that will cover the Service Charge cost
9. Annexe letting to NHS will continue until 2031 (end of current lease)
10. Annexe letting to BBC will end before 2023/24 financial year
11. Capital costs of Town Hall options as per inflated RIBA Stage 1 from Mace
12. Capital costs of Annexe refurb, council fit out, terrapin demolition as per worst case discussions with Mace
13. Town Hall 10 year capital costs as per RIBA Stage 1 from Mace
14. Museum 10 year capital costs – estimate
15. Museum capital receipt – valuation based on refurbishment for commercial office usage
16. Museum operational costs and income as per assumptions in the Museum and Heritage Service Outline Business Case
17. Innovation and Incubation Hub finances as per assumptions in the Innovation and Incubation Hub Outline Business Case
18. Off-site data centre will be in operation from 2022/23

- Appendix 2B – Museum and Heritage Outline Business Case
- Appendix 2B1 – Museum and Heritage Assumptions
- Appendix 2B2 – Museum and Heritage Interpretative Framework
- Appendix 2C – Innovation and Incubation Hub Outline Business Case
- Appendix 2C1 – Innovation and Incubation Hub Demand Analysis Report
- Appendix 2C2 – Innovation and Incubation Hub Soft Market Testing Analysis Report
- Appendix 2D – Equality Impact Assessment



Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Town Hall Quarter programme: Town Hall Refurbishment Outline Business Case
Lead officer	Andrew Cox, Group Head of Transformation
Person completing the EIA	Liam Hornsby, Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office
Type of policy, function or service:	Existing (reviewed) New/Proposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Version	v.01- 15 November 2021

1. Background

The Town Hall is a 1930s civic building situated at the northern end of Watford High Street and currently the main offices of Watford Borough Council, which includes the home of the council's democratic services. As part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, significant refurbishment of the Town Hall building is required which will allow continued use of the facility in the longer term as well as providing protection for this important heritage building within the town. As the size of the council's staff establishment has reduced over the years and now with a greater emphasis on more flexible and agile ways of working, the building itself has great potential for a broader range of uses. This would open up the Town Hall to the community, consolidate a smaller council footprint within the building, generating a reduction in the council's accommodation costs and providing opportunities for additional uses. This will make a significant contribution to the Town Hall Quarter vision to revitalise the town centre area around the Town Hall.

The business case at Appendix 2, therefore, pulls together a number of different projects from within the Town Hall Quarter programme to establish the best use of space within the Town Hall, ensuring that the associated refurbishment of the building meets the requirements of those who will be using it, including not just the council but also Watford Museum and the proposed Innovation and Incubation Hub, as the building is opened up more widely for the community. Prior to the commencement of the full refurbishment of the Town Hall, the council will be undertaking decarbonisation / energy efficiency works. During this period, access to the Town Hall will be limited and the guidance to staff to continue working from home unless they need to meet with their teams, members or partners or have a particular reason for coming 'into the office' will remain. However, alternative working spaces will be made available for staff, as well as for members. The arrangement will be in place between November 2021 and June 2022. Once the decarbonisation works are complete and the full refurbishment of the main Town Hall building commences, council staff and members will be relocated to two floors of the Annexe building, towards the rear of the Town Hall, from June 2022 for a period of two years.

As a key and wide-reaching programme for the council, understanding the impact on the town, community and our staff is fundamental to ensuring we meet our commitment to equalities and diversity and our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the Town Hall refurbishment on the people in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

This Equalities Impact Assessment will cover the physical refurbishment of the building. It does not cover the specific proposed uses for the building, which will be subject to separate Equalities Impact Analyses along with the Full Business Cases for the Museum and Innovation and Incubation Hub once the final designs and fit out plans have been confirmed. However, as work is already commencing on the design for the council’s temporary accommodation in the Annexe building towards the rear of the Town Hall, the impact on council staff and the protected characteristics outlined above will be assessed within this document.

3. What we know about the Watford population

Population

The current population of Watford is 96,600 (ONS mid-2020 estimate). This was slightly less than estimated in 2018 (96,800 rounded). The slowing of population growth across the UK (marked by a fall in Watford) is attributed to the lowest number of births for 14 years alongside an increase in emigration and a fall in international immigration.

The current government projection for population shows Watford’s population as 98,000 in 2040.

The graphs below show a comparison between the sex and age profile of England’s population with that of Watford. (ONS 2020).

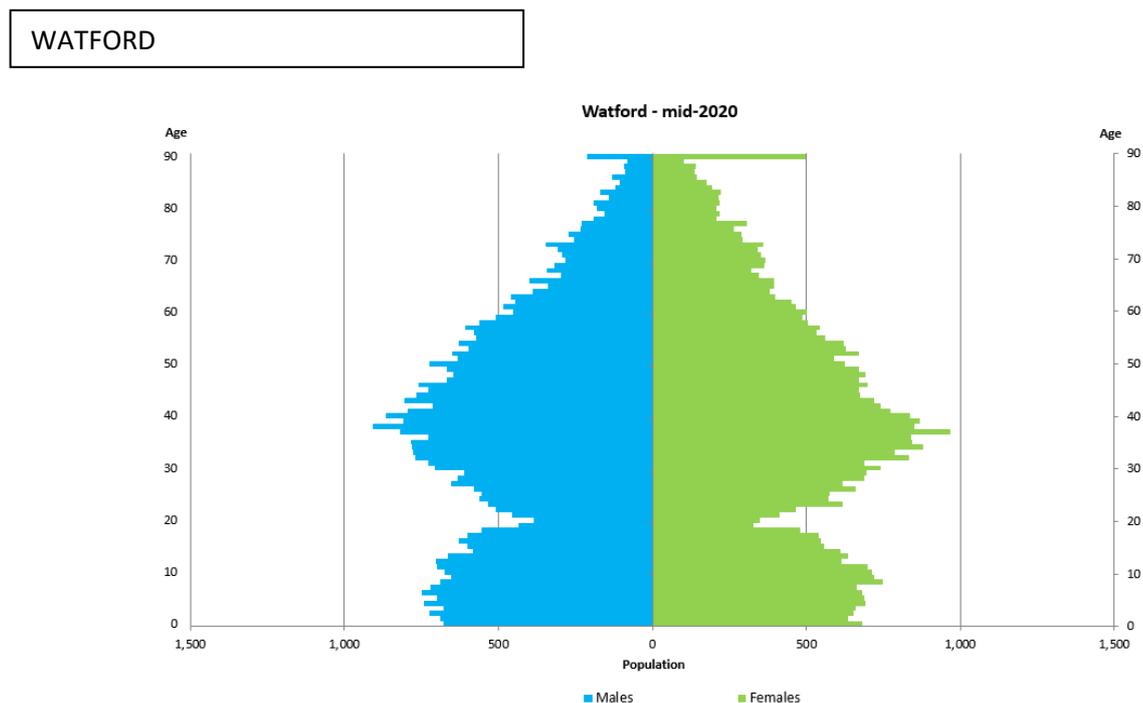


Diagram 1: Watford’s population in age bands

ENGLAND

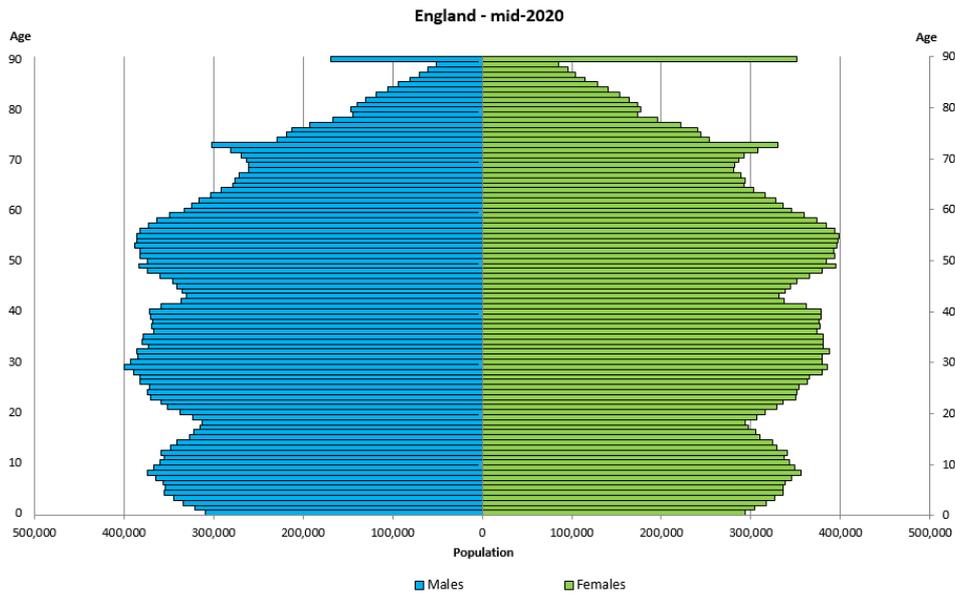


Diagram 2: England's population in age bands

The largest populations by age band in Watford are (mid 2020):

- 30-39 (16,110)
- 40-49 (14,600)
- 0-9 (13,800)

The average (mean age) for Watford is 37 years. This is also the mode age (i.e. the age with the most number of residents). This compares to an average age of 40 years for England.

The numbers in each successive age-band fall progressively from 40-49 until there are estimated to be 6,100 who are 75+.

The comparison with England overall highlights a younger profile than is seen nationally, with the age distribution indicating that Watford is a town where there is likely to be a high proportion of households with younger children and bringing up families. Whilst Watford is a town for all, it is recognised that our future plans need to reflect the large number of young people and families.

Population density

Population density (mid 2020) in Watford is high at 4,509 people per sq. km compared to just 728 and 434 people per sq. km in Hertfordshire and England respectively. This puts Watford in the top 40 most densely populated local authority areas in the UK. It is worth noting, however, that in comparison with many metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, our density is relatively low.

We recognise this means, overall, that open and high quality public realm spaces are particularly valuable to residents and quality of life in the town. These could be our parks and green spaces but more and more it is recognised that areas such as the High Street / town centre are used as spaces for people to meet, exercise and relax.

Number of households

The ONS data, based on the 2011 census, says that there were 36,681 households in Watford at the time of the Census; as of 31 May 2020 the figure was 40,275 (council tax base).

The average household size in Watford is currently 2.45. This is currently average for the region. Nationally, there is downward trend in household size projected over the next 20 years. The Watford average household size is envisaged to drop to 2.33 person household in 2039, which this is larger than that projected for the English average (2.21 in 2039) and the Hertfordshire average (2.29 in 2039). These projections have implications for Watford in terms of development and growth.

Household Composition

From the 2016 projections, one person households see the biggest increase in household growth in Watford, representing 44% of the total household growth. However, households with dependent children see the next biggest rise, with 35% of household growth; couples with other adults make up 9%; other (multi-person adult) households make up 7% and couple households (without children or other adults) make up the remaining 6% of all estimated growth.

Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire; it is one of the strengths of the town and what makes it such a vibrant and diverse place to live and work.

For Watford, the Census 2011 shows the following main breakdown in terms of ethnicity: White British (61.9%), White other (7.7%), Pakistani (6.7%), British Indian (5.5%), British other Asian (4.4%) and African (3.5%), White Irish (2.3%) and Caribbean (1.7%).

The full breakdown from the Census 2011 is at Appendix 2D1.

In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by ethnicity. This did not report ethnicities to the level of granularity of the Census but the estimates for 2016 were: White British (59% - 57,000 residents), Asian / Asian British (19% - 19,000 residents), All Other White (12% - 12,000 residents), Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (4% - 4,000 residents), Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group (4% - 4,000 residents) and Other Ethnic Group (1% - 1,000 residents).

National insurance registration

Census information is now 10 years old and it is likely that the ethnic profile of the borough has changed during this time. For example, the Census would not have captured the more recent EU arrivals to the borough (EU2 countries – Romania and Bulgaria, who were given residency rights in 2014). We know from other data such as National Insurance Registration that Watford has experienced a relatively high increase in nationals from the EU2 countries applying for National Insurance registrations as Watford residents. This follows a period of a high number from EU8 countries (including Poland, Latvia, Lithuania) who were given freedom of movement to the UK from 2004. Throughout the period the arrival of new residents from south Asia (e.g. Pakistan / India) has remained relatively constant.

The National Insurance Registrations for the year to March 2021 shows a significant reduction from the previous year (down from 2,194 registrations to 838. The combined effects of the global pandemic and Brexit have clearly impacted inward migration.

Of those who did register, 109 were from Romania and Bulgaria, 409 from South Asia and 89 from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, 65 came from South East Asia, 55 from sub Saharan Africa, 17 from North Africa and 27 from Central and South America.

The most recent breakdown (March 2021) is at Appendix 2D2.

Language spoken at home

Other data sources, including school language survey on the languages spoken by Watford school children at home, endorse the National Insurance findings that Watford remains a town with a diverse community with English still the predominant language (at around 60%) followed by (in order of self-selection by Watford families): Urdu, Polish, Tamil, Romanian, Gujarati, Pahari, Gujarati and Hindi. The most selected African language spoken is Arabic (113 families – although not spoken exclusively in Africa) and Akan/Twi-Fante (78 families).

The full breakdown for 2018 is at Appendix 2D3.

Births and origin of parents

In 2019, nearly 60% (58.8%) of children born to Watford based parents, had one or both parents born outside of the UK, with 42% having both parents born outside of the UK. 52% of new mothers in Watford were born outside of the UK (1,344 births in total, with 644 to mothers born in the UK and 700 born outside of the UK). Of these, 240 mothers were born in the 'new' EU countries – those that had joined since 2004, 300 were born elsewhere within the EU and 251 in the Middle East and Asia. 80 mothers were born in Africa.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) quarterly statistics (28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021) – experimental data

In May 2021, the Government issued data on the number of applications made to the EUSS from 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021, and applications concluded during the same time period. This shows that up to March 2020, 16,910 people in Watford had applied for EUSS. Of these, the following were the highest number of nationalities who had applied: Romanian (5,120), Polish (2,220), Italian (1,490), Portuguese (1,320), Bulgarian (800), Spanish (730) and Hungarian (720).

The full analysis is at Appendix 2D4.

Disability / Health

Around 85% of the population of Watford state that they have 'good health' and just under 14% recorded a disability (from Census 2011). We do not have details as to what these disabilities are but they will include a wide range of physical and mental health disabilities or impairments.

The 2019 NHS Health Profile's summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is 'varied' compared with the England average.

About 11% (2,305) of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average. Life expectancy is 6.1 years lower for men and 2.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Watford than in the least deprived areas.

Religion / belief

The religious breakdown in the Census 2011 of the main religions in Watford was: Christian (54.1%), Muslim (9.8%), Hindu (4.8%), with no religion stated at 21.4%. In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by religion. This took an estimated population of 94,000 for Watford and the main religions identified through the estimates were: Christian (53%), Muslim (10%), Hindu (9%) with no religion at 26%.

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment

Watford has no specific data on the transgender community within the borough or for the sexual

orientation of our community. Both these are covered by the Equality Act 2010. However, it is anticipated that this information will be available shortly following the results of the 2021 Census.

Education and skills

A skilled workforce supports the economic development and employment aspirations for Watford.

Watford residents are well educated with 49% (2020)¹ educated to NVQ level 4+ compared to 47% and 42.8% for Hertfordshire and England respectively. The number educated to NVQ level 3+ is also higher than both Hertfordshire and England but drops below these comparator levels for qualifications above NVQ level 2 and NVQ level 1.

It is estimated that 13.3% of Watford residents have no or unrecognised qualifications compared to 10.4% and 11.9% for Hertfordshire and England. This lack of qualifications is a cause for concern in what will become an increasingly competitive jobs market as businesses recover from the pandemic.

Watford has a slightly higher percentage of micro enterprises (90.2%) than England overall (89.7%) but slightly lower than Hertfordshire (91.0%), which shows there is considerable scope for an Innovation and Incubation to support start-ups and growing micro businesses (micro businesses are those with 0-9 employees so includes sole traders).

Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019 were published by the Government in September 2019, and updates the previous 2015 Indices, published in September 2015. The Indices of Deprivation measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), in England

The IoD2019 is based on 39 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which are combined and weighted to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019.

In the IMD 2019, Watford is ranked 195 out of 317 authorities, putting it in the 7th decile nationally. This means that, overall, Watford is less deprived than half the authorities in England.

Watford is, however, the third most deprived authority in Hertfordshire. (Stevenage and Broxbourne are the most deprived.) Conversely, three Hertfordshire authorities are among the 10% least deprived authorities in England (Three Rivers, East Herts and St Albans).

Overall, Watford is not an area with significant deprivation issues and the majority of the LSOAs within the town are in the bottom 50% of LSOAs nationally for deprivation; the borough's position has improved relative to that of 2015.

The combined deprivation index, which weights income and employment more heavily than the other domains, obscures the more deprived areas in Watford, which are affected by crime, living environment deprivation, health and disability, and education, skills and training deprivation in particular. This is, at least in part, because income and employment deprivation are less of an issue for Watford than for other areas.

The ten most deprived LSOAs in Watford, as ranked in the IMD 2019 are as follows (the ranking for the last IMD data in 2015 is shown in brackets in the first column). The LSOA, which contains some of Whippendell Road, Chester Road and Durban Road West is within the second most deprived health and disability quartile does not feature in the top 10 most deprived LSOAs

¹ Source: ONS Annual population survey -

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157230/report.aspx?c1=1941962834&c2=2092957699#tabquals>

The LSOA in which the Town Hall Quarter is located is within Park Ward and, whilst not one of the most deprived in Watford, is close to more deprived areas within Central and Vicarage wards.

Watford rank	Ward	LSOA code	Hertfordshire		England	
			Rank	Decile in Herts (1st = most deprived)	Rank	Decile (1st = most deprived)
1 (1)	Central (Water Lane, Gladstone Road, Grosvenor Road, part of Radlett Road, Brockleberry Close, Raphael Drive, top part of Queens Road)	E01023860 (009B)	5 (5)	1st (1st)	5055 (5005)	2nd (2nd)
2 (3)	Holywell (Caractacus Green, part of Charlock Way, Moor View, Jellicoe Road, Stripling Way, Rose Gardens)	E01023865 (011C)	21 (22)	1st (1st)	7239 (7800)	3rd (3rd)
3 (2)	Meriden (Garsmouth Way, Aldbury Close, Harvest End, part of York Way)	E01023876 (003D)	26(19)	1st (1st)	7924 (7590)	3rd (3rd)
4 (4)	Holywell (Ascot Road, Greenhill Crescent, Caxton Way, Croxley View)	E01023866 (011D)	27 (30)	1st (1st)	8294 (9203)	3rd (3rd)
5 (7)	Woodside (Haines Way, Queenswood Crescent, Sheriff Way, Nottingham Close)	E01023906 (001C)	61 (41)	1st (1st)	10719 (10062)	4th (4th)
6 (10)	Oxhey (Deacons Hill, Blackwell Drive, Riverside Road, Eastbury Road, Thorpe Crescent)	E01023883 (012B)	62 (49)	1st (1st)	10758 (10710)	4th (4th)
7 (13)	Callowland (Maude Crescent, St George's Road, Breakspere Close, Nicholas Close)	E01023857 (006C)	67 (56)	1st (1st)	10894 (10812)	4th (4th)
8 (9)	Meriden (Gaddesden Crescent, Bovington Crescent, Garston Lane)	E01023877 (003E)	73 (75)	2nd (2nd)	11225 (11837)	4th (4th)
9 (12)	Leggatts (The Harebreaks, Chestnut Walk, Foxhill, Brushrise, Elm Grove)	E01023870 (004C)	78 (52)	2nd (1st)	11515 (10734)	4th (4th)
10 (5)	Stanborough (Clarke Way, Rushton Avenue, Orbital Crescent, Harris Road)	E01023891 (002B)	92 (31)	1st (1st)	11970 (9377)	4th (3rd)

Table 1: Watford Ward Data from the English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019

MOSAIC profile

Our MOSAIC profiling of the borough enhances our understanding of our population and provides valuable context for our decision-making as well as underpinning our communications and engagement. It confirms we are a young and diverse borough.

Type Code	Type Label	Type Description	2020 Households	2020 Watford %	Trend since 2017	2017 Rank
O61	Career Builders	Professional singles and couples in their 20s and 30s progressing in their field of work from commutabl	5257	13.3%	↑	1
G26	Cafés and Catchments	Affluent families with growing children living in upmarket housing in city environs	3660	9.2%	↑	3
N58	Culture & Comfort	Thriving families with good incomes in diverse suburbs	3575	9.0%	↓	2
O63	Flexible Workforce	Successful young renters ready to move to follow worthwhile incomes from service sector jobs	2927	7.4%	↑	6
I36	Solid Economy	Stable families with children, renting higher value homes from social landlords	2701	6.8%	↑	5
N57	Community Elders	Established older households owning city homes in diverse neighbourhoods	2574	6.5%	↑	9
H30	Primary Ambitions	Families with school-age children, who have bought the best house they can afford within popular neigh	2434	6.1%	↑	7
G27	Thriving Independence	Well-qualified older singles with incomes from successful professional careers in good quality housing	1949	4.9%	↓	4
N60	Ageing Access	Older residents owning small inner suburban properties with good access to amenities	1731	4.4%	↑	10
B05	Premium Fortunes	Asset-rich families with substantial income, established in distinctive, expansive homes in wealthy encl	1448	3.6%	↓	8
Total (Top 10)			28256			
Total Households in Watford			39675			

Table 2: Watford's MOSAIC profile (2019)

4. What we know about council staff

The statistics used below are taken from the council's Human Resources and Payroll information system which provides the council with comprehensive reporting allowing a full analysis of our workforce data to be undertaken. Although the council has the capability to undertake reporting, the data received is dependent on individuals disclosing their personal information. Where employees have chosen not to disclose this information, there are gaps in the data that is currently held. However, the limitations of this system have been recognised and a number of measures, detailed within the council's 2021 Workforce Monitoring Report, have been introduced. It is anticipated that these initiatives, along with our continuing on-going requests to employees to update their records, should help provide a greater degree of accuracy on the makeup of our workforce in the future.

Ethnicity

The total number of employees from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background for 2020/21 is 14.73%. The largest background at 33.18% is White: British but it should be noted that 50.82% of employees have not provided this information.

Ethnic Origin Description	No of Employees 2020/21	% of Employees 2020/21
Asian British: Bangladeshi	0	0.0%
Asian British: Indian	8	3.36%
Asian British: Other	5	2.1%
Asian British: Pakistani	2	0.84%
Black British: African	4	2.84%
Black British: Caribbean	2	0.84%
Black British: Other	1	0.42%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	3	1.26%
Other Ethnic Group	1	0.42%
White: British	79	33.18%
White: Irish	3	1.26%
White: Other	9	3.78%
Prefer not to say / not stated	121	50.82%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 3: Analysis by Ethnicity (Ethnic composition of council employees at 31 March 2021 compared to 31 March 2020 and compared to the current local population)

	2020/21	
From ethnic minority background	Total Employees (Headcount)	% of Employees
Yes	35	14.73%
No	82	34.45%
Prefer not to say / Not stated	121	50.82%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 4: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Group

Gender

39.5% of the workforce are male and 60.5% of the workforce are female.

Gender	Total no of employees	% of employees
Female	144	60.5%
Male	94	39.5%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 5: The council's gender profile at 31 March 2021

Disability

A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability to perform normal day-to-day activities. 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial and the effect of the impairment will have lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months. The council fully supports the Disability Confident employer scheme.

Disability	Total no of employees	% of employees
No	71	29.83%
Yes	8	3.36%
Not Stated	159	66.81%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 6: Council employees declaring that they have a disability

The target percentage of all employees declaring that they had a disability was 5.00%, with an actual figure of 3.36% (8 out of 238). 66.81% of employees have not provided this information. We continue to make efforts to address this by on-going requests and reminders to our employees to update their records.

A high percentage of employees have not stated whether they have a disability or not, limiting a detailed analysis.

Age

The age statistics at 31 March 2021 show that the median age of council employees is between 40 and 49 years. The total number of employees under 40 is 65, which is an increase from last year. Last year, the number of employees under 40 was 61. This represents a 6.56% increase.

Age Group	Number of employees	% of employees
29 and under	23	9.66%
30 – 39	42	17.65%
40 – 49	64	26.89%
50 – 59	73	30.67%
60 – 64	31	13.03%
65 +	5	2.1%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 7: The council's Age Profile as at 31 March 2021

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment

103 employees, making up 43.28% of the workforce identified as heterosexual. The council currently works with the Hertfordshire LGBT group, advertising events on the Intranet to raise awareness of the support network available for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender employees. More collaborative work is planned.

Sexual Orientation	No of employees	% of employees
Bisexual	3	1.26%
Gay Man	2	0.84%
Gender Reassignment	0	0.0%
Heterosexual	103	43.28%
Lesbian / Gay Woman	0	0.0%

Not Stated	129	54.2%
Prefer not to say	1	0.42%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 8: Council staff sexual orientation as at 31 March 2021

It is noted that the majority of employees (54.2%) have not completed this section of the Equality Monitoring form. The council continues to work with employees to increase the collation of this data, to help inform our practice.

Religion

23.53% of the workforce identified themselves as Christian with 15.13% advising that they had no religious belief. The workforce is also made up of those with Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh religious beliefs, although 52.94% did not provide this information.

Religion	No of employees	% of employees
Christian	56	23.53%
Declined to say	5	2.1%
Hindu	9	3.78%
Jewish	1	0.42%
Muslim	2	0.84%
No religious belief	36	15.13%
Sikh	2	0.84%
Other	1	0.42%
Not stated	126	52.94%
Total	238	100.00%

Table 9: Council staff religion as at 31 March 2021

5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the Town Hall Refurbishment project

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the Town Hall refurbishment:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

Town Hall Refurbishment

The Town Hall refurbishment project will see the space within the Town Hall brought up to modern standards. This will include ensuring that the building is fully accessible in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and with best practice in terms of meeting the needs of our diverse community, including those with protected characteristics. This will be important in ensuring that all visitors to the future Town Hall building can access each part of it and enjoy the full range of services and facilities the refurbished building will offer, whether it be to visit the Museum, work in the Innovation and Incubation Hub or partake in local democracy through attendance at democratic council meetings. This will equally apply to toilet facilities, ensuring that disabled and baby change facilities are available for users of and visitors to the Town Hall and that gender neutral as well as gender specific toilets will be incorporated within the future design.

During the refurbishment work, the council will maintain customer-facing services, allowing customers who are unable or prefer not to transact with the council online to receive a face to face service from our Customer Service team. Our customer services will remain accessible with a range of facilities that we know are important to accessibility and for the council to feel welcoming and inclusive, including telephones, public computers and hearing loops retained. Blue badge parking will also be retained throughout the period of the works as will access to translation services

Staff Accommodation

Prior to the commencement of the full refurbishment of the Town Hall, the council will be undertaking decarbonisation / energy efficiency works. During this period, access to the Town Hall will be limited and the guidance to staff to continue working from home remains unless they need to meet with their teams, members or partners or have a particular reason for coming 'into the office'. However, alternative working spaces will be made available for staff who are unable to work from home or need to come into the office, as well as for members. The arrangement will be in place between November 2021 and June 2022. Once the decarbonisation works are complete and the full refurbishment of the main Town Hall building commences, council staff and members will be relocated to the Annexe building, towards the rear of the Town Hall, from June 2022 for a period of two years.

During the decarbonisation works, staff working facilities will be re-provided elsewhere for those who are not able to work from home, although some working offices will be retained in the Town Hall, including some for continued use by members.

All Heads of Service have identified any special working arrangements or equipment for staff and provision for these staff has been made where this is necessary. This has included darkened rooms, specialist seating and access to standing desks. Whilst the majority of staff will book desks using an app on their mobile

phone, those without access to a mobile phone or who are unable to use the app will be able to book by emailing the council's Facilities Management Team. Blue badge parking for staff and members will remain available during this period.

These temporary working arrangements provide a far greater mix of working facilities than previously, with space available at Cheslyn House, Wiggshall Depot, Cassiobury Hub, Woodside Leisure Centre and Watford Community Housing. Disabled parking and toilet facilities are available at each of these locations, which are fully accessible.

As throughout the pandemic, it is recognised that working from home is not easy or possible for all members of staff. All staff are encouraged to discuss any issues with their manager so that specific arrangements can be put in place for those who need to or who would benefit from working from a designated council working space and sufficient provision has been factored into the interim plans for this purpose. Furthermore, a whole host of support remains available for staff, including mental health champions, our employee assistance programme and our Watford Health and You scheme. To ensure that our managers are able to support staff, a programme of mental health training has been rolled out to all those with line management responsibility.

Given Covid-19 is known to disproportionately impact older people, those with disabilities and with underlying health conditions and those from ethnic minority backgrounds, all temporary working locations have been subject to a Covid-19 risk assessment and mitigation measures implemented. This has included mandatory mask wearing when moving round the buildings, screens between desks and enhanced cleaning regimes, as well as clear records of those who have accessed the building. All staff are advised to take a Lateral Flow Test prior to attending a council building and not to attend at all if they feel unwell or have any Covid-19 symptoms.

Staff Interim Space – Annexe

Following the completion of the decarbonisation works in the Town Hall, staff and member accommodation will be provided on the top two floors of the Annexe building, situated to the rear of the main Town Hall. The building will be fully accessible, having undergone a refurbishment over the winter and spring of 2021/22. All facilities, including those used by existing staff and members with protected characteristics, such as prayer rooms, will be recreated in this new space and a range of working provision, from desks and meeting rooms to more collaborative space will be provided. As this space is developed, the council will continue to engage with the Staff Ambassadors' Group and member groups to understand the space requirements. Whilst parking on-site is likely to be reduced during this period, blue badge parking will be retained close to the Annexe building, although the exact location is yet to be confirmed.

These changes are being introduced in the context of a new way of working for the council. The adoption of agile working seeks to provide staff with more ownership over where and how they would like to work to provide the best service to our customers. This is intended to support a better work / life balance so that other commitments can be met alongside work.

A. Positive impacts

Potential positive effects

The Town Hall refurbishment is intended to improve the space in the Town Hall, allowing it to be opened up to the community.

Some of the positive impacts include:

- Ensuring that the Town Hall is fully DDA compliant and accessible for all visitors – building in those elements that will send a positive message to our diverse community that the Town Hall is somewhere they will feel welcome, respected and included

- Improved facilities, including toilets, prayer rooms and mothers' rooms, for those with protected characteristics
- Retention of access to face to face customer service provision, ensuring that residents who need to access council services, but do not have access to digital challenges, can continue to receive support
- More residents and visitors of all background having access to the heritage Town Hall building, including to Watford Museum where more people of all ages will be able to learn about Watford's rich and diverse history
- All equality groups should benefit from activities to strengthen the local economy, such as using the Town Hall as a base for our Innovation and Incubation Hub, through attracting and supporting local businesses, which supports job opportunities and ensures local businesses thrive
- All groups will benefit from our ambition to reduce the carbon footprint of the Town Hall building and the reduced footprint of the council offices which will reduce the number of staff travelling to the office and contributing to congestion in the town
- Overall, with a wider community role and focus, the Town Hall can support the council foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

Recommendation 1: Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and engagement and updating the Watford context on a regular basis, particularly through the Census 2021 information we expect in the next couple of years

Recommendation 2: Ensure EIAs are undertaken for the Museum, Innovation Hub and long-term council space in the Town Hall as the final plans are developed

Recommendation 3: Ensure our consultation and engagement with our staff and community continues to collect relevant equalities data so we have a better understanding of the impact of our work, strengthening our explanation of why we need to collect this and explaining how the information is used to support our work and better community outcomes

Recommendation 4: Seek community feedback on the ideas for the Town Hall, particularly relating to those with protected characteristics

B. Negative impacts

Potential negative effects

These would arise if equalities and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are not considered through the design and delivery of the Town Hall refurbishment. This would result in a refurbished Town Hall that has not taken into account the needs of the community, particularly those with a protected characteristics.

The main ways of mitigating these potential negative effects:

- Staff Ambassador Group – provides feedback and support to the organisation and can be asked to champion equalities within their services

- Town Hall Quarter programme board, made up of project sponsors and chaired by the Managing Director as the programme Senior Responsible Office, will receive updates on design and any potential impact on equalities
- Member Steering Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor and formed of elected representatives, will receive updates on design and any potential impact on equalities
- Working with our community through our Town Hall Quarter stakeholder group to find out what is important to them and to hear their views

No negative impacts which cannot be mitigated have been identified in relation to the refurbishment of the building. However, it is acknowledged that the provision of interim space amid the introduction of new ways of working could have an impact on those with protected characteristics. For that reason, the council has sought to identify individual working requirements and put in place provisions to ensure that staff have a location for which to work based on their specific requirements.

6. Overall conclusion

This EIA has taken into account the council's public sector equality duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 and is intended to assist the council in meeting its duty.

The information within this report and an assessment of both the positive and negative impacts together indicate that the Town Hall refurbishment will deliver positive impacts for the Watford community and council staff and members. This is because the refurbishment is ultimately intended to improve the space within the Town Hall, allowing it to be opened up to the community and brought up to modern standards, including in relation to sustainability and accessibility.

Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
The Town Hall is DDA compliant and accessible for all visitors	Age and disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for the building to be DDA compliant will form part of the brief for the Town Hall design and construction
Improved facilities, including toilets, prayer rooms and space for nursing mothers	Disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for all existing facilities (such as prayer rooms, disabled toilets and baby changing facilities) to be retained and improved will form part of the brief for the Town Hall design and construction The requirement for new facilities, such as space for nursing mothers and gender neutral toilets, will form part of the brief for the Town Hall design and construction
Retention of access to face to face customer service provision, ensuring that residents who need to access council services but do not have access to digital challenges, can continue to receive support	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for face-to-face customer service provision to remain accessible throughout the decarbonisation and refurbishment works forms part of the programme A welcoming, accessible and customer-focused face-to-face customer service provision will be considered as part of future plans

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
More residents and visitors of all background having access to the heritage Town Hall building, including to Watford Museum where more people of all ages will be able to learn about Watford's rich and diverse history	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Museum within the Town Hall building (and away from the existing Benskin House), subject to a specific Equalities Impact Analysis on this as the designs are finalised
All equality groups should benefit from activities to strengthen the local economy, such as using the Town Hall as a base for our Innovation and Incubation Hub, through attracting and supporting local businesses, which supports job opportunities and ensures local businesses thrive	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Innovation and Incubation Hub within the Town Hall building, subject to a specific Equalities Impact Analysis on this as the designs are finalised
All groups will benefit from our ambition to reduce the carbon footprint of the Town Hall building and the reduced footprint of the council offices which will reduce the number of staff travelling to the office and contributing to congestion in the town		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the agile ways of working are embedded within the organisation through the use of Agile Charters, training and changes to corporate values and behaviours

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
Ensure our consultation and engagement with our staff and community continues to collect relevant equalities data so we have a better understanding of the impact of our work	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consultations seek feedback from our communities and staff in terms of their demographics and protected characteristics, where relevant • Ongoing engagement with the staff ambassadors group • Ensure feedback is considered in decision making where relevant and appropriate • Make sure we explain why we are collecting information on protected characteristics and show how it can make a real difference
The Town Hall can support the council foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful communications and engagement with the community

Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
Reduced ability for residents with protected characteristics to raise specific concerns with their democratic representatives if space in the Town Hall is not available	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through both the decarbonisation works and full refurbishment works, meeting space for elected members will be retained • Democratic meetings will continue to take place from accessible locations within Watford and will be accessible to members of the public. These will also be broadcast online.
Potential if managers and teams do not fully consider equality impacts as part of staff attending the interim council accommodation spaces	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff with line management responsibility asked to identify specific working arrangements for those with protected characteristics, such as disability, so that these can be replicated in the interim spaces. • Effective training so staff and members understand the importance of considering the equality impacts of decision making and the council's public sector equality duty • Leadership to champion equalities and challenge decisions and proposals in the context of equalities and diversity
Lack of understanding of the community and issues that are affecting those with a protected characteristic	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and updating the Watford context on a regular basis • Ensure learning from Covid-19 is built into our planning and that we respond to what emerges from research in terms of inequalities and impact on protected characteristics

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with our community to understand from them about issues and what matters to them • Build greater understanding through engagement with our community and work with them to support • Ensure EIAs are carried out, are effective and support decision making

This Equalities Impact Analysis has been developed by:

Liam Hornsby, Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office (15 November 2021)

And approved by:

Kathryn Robson, Executive Head of Strategy and Communications (19 November 2021)

Appendix 2D1:

Census 2011: Watford Borough ethnicity data

	WATFORD 2011
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	61.9% (55,875)
White Irish	2.3% (2,063)
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.1% (61)
White: Other White	7.7% (6,947)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	1.1% (990)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	0.5% (412)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	1.0% (939)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	0.8% (763)
Asian/Asian British: Indian	5.5% (4,923)
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	6.7% (6,082)
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.4% (362)
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.9% (822)
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	4.4% (3,981)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	3.5% (3,142)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	1.7% (1,558)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	0.6% (529)
Other ethnic group: Arab	0.3% (294)
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	0.6% (558)

Appendix 2D2:

National Insurance registrations – Hertfordshire – March 2021

		European Union				Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Asia				Rest of the World					Unknown
	TOTAL	Europe an Union EU15	Europe an Union EU8	Europe an Union EU2	Europe an Union Other	Other Europe	Middle East and Central Asia	East Asia	South Asia	South East Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa	North Africa	North America	Central and South America	Oceania	Unknown
Broxbourne	188	12	12	63	..	34	5	6	20	5	26	6	8
Dacorum	302	57	9	60	..	20	8	5	67	9	31	8	6	7	..	5
East Hertfordshire	288	152	18	26	..	14	..	5	20	11	20	5	10	12
Hertsmere	325	45	10	64	..	41	14	8	40	24	48	8	16	8	7	..
North Hertfordshire	153	19	7	10	5	5	..	11	41	12	26	6	7	5
St Albans	268	63	10	22	9	18	10	6	39	7	36	5	31	9	15	..
Stevenage	402	20	7	49	..	9	7	6	126	86	78	16	6	5
Three Rivers	140	15	..	18	..	9	..	5	55	..	14	..	8	7	6	..
Watford	838	64	25	109	..	24	12	7	409	65	55	17	17	27	7	..
Welwyn Hatfield	1,227	57	22	125	..	27	21	16	541	29	339	9	16	13	10	..

World area reporting structure - subgroups and nationalities.

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Asia	East Asia	China
Asia	East Asia	Hong Kong
Asia	East Asia	Japan
Asia	East Asia	Macau
Asia	East Asia	Mongolia
Asia	East Asia	North Korea
Asia	East Asia	South Korea
Asia	East Asia	Taiwan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Afghanistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Bahrain
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Iran
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Iraq
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Israel
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Jordan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Kazakhstan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Kuwait
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Kyrgyzstan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Lebanon
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Oman
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Qatar
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Saudi Arabia
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Sharjah

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Syria
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Tajikistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Turkmenistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	United Arab Emirates
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Uzbekistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Yemen
Asia	South Asia	Bangladesh
Asia	South Asia	Bhutan
Asia	South Asia	British Indian Ocean Territory
Asia	South Asia	India
Asia	South Asia	Maldives
Asia	South Asia	Nepal
Asia	South Asia	Pakistan
Asia	South Asia	Sri Lanka
Asia	South East Asia	Brunei
Asia	South East Asia	Burma
Asia	South East Asia	Cambodia
Asia	South East Asia	East Timor
Asia	South East Asia	Indonesia
Asia	South East Asia	Laos
Asia	South East Asia	Malaysia
Asia	South East Asia	Philippines
Asia	South East Asia	Sabah
Asia	South East Asia	Sarawak
Asia	South East Asia	Singapore
Asia	South East Asia	Thailand
Asia	South East Asia	Vietnam
European Union	European Union EU15	Austria
European Union	European Union EU15	Belgium

World region	Sub group	Nationality
European Union	European Union EU15	Denmark
European Union	European Union EU15	Finland
European Union	European Union EU15	France
European Union	European Union EU15	Germany
European Union	European Union EU15	Greece
European Union	European Union EU15	Ireland
European Union	European Union EU15	Italy
European Union	European Union EU15	Luxembourg
European Union	European Union EU15	Netherlands
European Union	European Union EU15	Portugal
European Union	European Union EU15	Spain
European Union	European Union EU15	Sweden
European Union	European Union EU2	Bulgaria
European Union	European Union EU2	Romania
European Union	European Union EU8	Czech Republic
European Union	European Union EU8	Estonia
European Union	European Union EU8	Hungary
European Union	European Union EU8	Latvia
European Union	European Union EU8	Lithuania
European Union	European Union EU8	Poland
European Union	European Union EU8	Slovakia
European Union	European Union EU8	Slovenia
European Union	European Union Other	Croatia
European Union	European Union Other	Cyprus
European Union	European Union Other	Malta
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Albania
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Andorra
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Armenia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Azerbaijan

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Belarus
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Bouvet Island
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Faroe Islands
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Georgia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Greenland
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Iceland
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Liechtenstein
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Macedonia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Moldova
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Monaco
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Norway
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Russia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	San Marino
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Serbia & Montenegro
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Switzerland
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Turkey
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Ukraine
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Vatican City
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Anguilla
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Antigua
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Antilles (Netherlands)
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Argentina
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Aruba and Curaçao
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Bahamas
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Barbados
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Barbuda
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Belize
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Bermuda

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Bolivia
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Brazil
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Cayman Islands
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Chile
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Colombia
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Costa Rica
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Cuba
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Dominica
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Dominican Rep
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Ecuador
Rest of the World	Central and South America	El Salvador
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Falkland Islands
Rest of the World	Central and South America	French Guiana
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Grenada
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Guadeloupe
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Guatemala
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Guyana
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Haiti
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Honduras
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Jamaica
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Martinique
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Mexico
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Montserrat
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Nicaragua
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Panama
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Paraguay
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Peru
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Sint Maarten (Dutch Part)
Rest of the World	Central and South America	South Georgia & South Sandwich Island

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Kitts and Nevis
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Lucia
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Pierre & Miquelon
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Vincent & Grenadines
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Suriname
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Trinidad & Tobago
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Turks & Caicos Islands
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Uruguay
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Venezuela
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Virgin Islands (British)
Rest of the World	North Africa	Algeria
Rest of the World	North Africa	Egypt
Rest of the World	North Africa	Libya
Rest of the World	North Africa	Mauritania
Rest of the World	North Africa	Morocco
Rest of the World	North Africa	Sudan
Rest of the World	North Africa	Tunisia
Rest of the World	North Africa	Western Sahara
Rest of the World	North America	Canada
Rest of the World	North America	Puerto Rico
Rest of the World	North America	United States
Rest of the World	North America	Virgin Islands (USA)
Rest of the World	Oceania	American Samoa
Rest of the World	Oceania	Antarctic Territories (British)
Rest of the World	Oceania	Australia
Rest of the World	Oceania	Christmas Island
Rest of the World	Oceania	Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Cook Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Fiji

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Oceania	French Polynesia (inc. Tahiti)
Rest of the World	Oceania	French Southern Territories
Rest of the World	Oceania	Heard Island & McDonald Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Micronesia (Sub Region)
Rest of the World	Oceania	New Caledonia
Rest of the World	Oceania	New Zealand
Rest of the World	Oceania	Niue
Rest of the World	Oceania	Norfolk Island
Rest of the World	Oceania	Papua New Guinea
Rest of the World	Oceania	Pitcairn
Rest of the World	Oceania	Samoa
Rest of the World	Oceania	Solomon Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Tokelau
Rest of the World	Oceania	Tonga
Rest of the World	Oceania	Tuvalu
Rest of the World	Oceania	US Minor Outlying Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Vanuatu
Rest of the World	Oceania	Wallis & Futuna
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Benin
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Botswana
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Burkina Faso
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Burundi
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Cameroon
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Cape Verde
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Central African Republic
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Chad
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Comoros
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Congo

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Congo (Democratic Republic)
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Djibouti
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Equatorial Guinea
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Eritrea
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Ethiopia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Gabon
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Gambia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Ghana
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Guinea
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Guinea-Bissau
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Ivory Coast
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Kenya
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Lesotho
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Liberia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Madagascar
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Malawi
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mali
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mauritius
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mayotte
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mozambique
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Namibia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Niger
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Nigeria
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Reunion
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Rwanda
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sao Tome and Principe
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Senegal
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Seychelles
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sierra Leone

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Somalia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	South Africa
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	St Helena
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Swaziland
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Tanzania
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Togo
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Uganda
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Zambia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Zimbabwe

Appendix 2D3:

Languages spoken at home from Watford school survey

Language	Total	Percentage
English*	8751	59.10%
Urdu	980	6.62%
Polish	501	3.38%
Tamil	456	3.08%
Romanian	380	2.57%
Gujarati	373	2.52%
Pahari (Pakistan)	265	1.79%
Hindi	226	1.53%
Other than English*	150	1.01%
Portuguese	150	1.01%
Panjabi	121	0.82%
Malayalam	117	0.79%
Arabic	113	0.76%
Sinhala	97	0.66%
Italian	96	0.65%
Telugu	81	0.55%
Akan/Twi-Fante	78	0.53%
Bulgarian	77	0.52%
French	75	0.51%
Spanish	74	0.50%
Albanian/Shqip	64	0.43%
Nepali	61	0.41%
Turkish	58	0.39%
Bengali	56	0.38%
Hungarian	55	0.37%
Russian	49	0.33%
Filipino	48	0.32%
Chinese	44	0.30%
Chinese (Cantonese)	41	0.28%
Marathi	38	0.26%
Dari Persian	35	0.24%
Somali	34	0.23%
Portuguese (any other)	33	0.22%
Lithuanian	32	0.22%
Panjabi (Mirpuri)	32	0.22%
Romanian (Romania)	32	0.22%
Pashto/Pakhto	31	0.21%
Persian/Farsi	31	0.21%
Slovak	31	0.21%
Shona	30	0.20%
Wolof	30	0.20%
Akan (Twi/Asante)	29	0.20%
Japanese	29	0.20%

Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua)	28	0.19%
Refused*	28	0.19%
Yoruba	28	0.19%
Czech	27	0.18%
Portuguese (Brazil)	24	0.16%
Farsi/Persian (any other)	24	0.16%
Tagalog/Filipino	24	0.16%
Tagalog	21	0.14%
Classification pending	21	0.14%
Bengali (Sylheti)	19	0.13%
Panjabi (any other)	19	0.13%
Greek	18	0.12%
Kashmiri	18	0.12%
Panjabi (Gurmukhi)	17	0.11%
Kannada	16	0.11%
Akan (Fante)	15	0.10%
Dutch/Flemish	15	0.10%
Bengali (any other)	14	0.09%
German	14	0.09%
Swahili/Kiswahili	13	0.09%
Thai	13	0.09%
Igbo	12	0.08%
Believed to be other than English*	11	0.07%
Vietnamese	11	0.07%
Kikuyu/Gikuyu	10	0.07%
Other language	10	0.07%
Katchi	9	0.06%
Korean	9	0.06%
Macedonian	9	0.06%
Swahili (any other)	9	0.06%
Ukrainian	9	0.06%
Danish	8	0.05%
Guarani	8	0.05%
Arabic (Algeria)	7	0.05%
Ewe	7	0.05%
Konkani	7	0.05%
Kurdish	7	0.05%
Lingala	7	0.05%
Serbian	7	0.05%
Latvian	6	0.04%
Panjabi (Pothwari)	6	0.04%
Believed to be English*	5	0.03%
Ga	5	0.03%
Hebrew	5	0.03%
Manding/Malinke	5	0.03%
Bosnian	5	0.03%
Sindhi	5	0.03%
Afrikaans	4	0.03%

Arabic (any other)	4	0.03%
Caribbean Creole English	4	0.03%
Chinese (any other)	4	0.03%
Chichewa/Nyanja	4	0.03%
Fula/Fulfulde-Pulaar	4	0.03%
Ndebele	4	0.03%
Slovenian	4	0.03%
Berber (Tamashek)	4	0.03%
Finnish	3	0.02%
Greek (any other)	3	0.02%
Krio	3	0.02%
Norwegian	3	0.02%
Pahari/Himachali (India)	3	0.02%
Romanian (Moldova)	3	0.02%
Croatian	3	0.02%
Swedish	3	0.02%
Amharic	2	0.01%
Arabic (Morocco)	2	0.01%
Caribbean Creole French	2	0.01%
Idoma	2	0.01%
Luganda	2	0.01%
Manding/Malinke (any other)	2	0.01%
Bambara	2	0.01%
Ndebele (South Africa)	2	0.01%
Romany/English Romanes	2	0.01%
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	2	0.01%
Tibetan	2	0.01%
Adangme	1	0.01%
Assyrian/Aramaic	1	0.01%
Bemba	1	0.01%
Burmese/Myanma	1	0.01%
Bengali (Chittagong/Noakhali)	1	0.01%
Chinese (Hakka)	1	0.01%
Welsh/Cymraeg	1	0.01%
Ebira	1	0.01%
Esan/Ishan	1	0.01%
Estonian	1	0.01%
Greek (Cyprus)	1	0.01%
Ilokano	1	0.01%
Kisi (West Africa)	1	0.01%
Kurdish (Kurmanji)	1	0.01%
Lusoga	1	0.01%
Malay/Indonesian	1	0.01%
Malay (any other)	1	0.01%
Mauritian/Seychelles Creole	1	0.01%
Ndebele (Zimbabwe)	1	0.01%
Romani (International)	1	0.01%
Sotho/Sesotho	1	0.01%

Tiv		1	0.01%
Berber/Tamazight (any other)		1	0.01%
Uzbek		1	0.01%
Venda		1	0.01%
Xhosa		1	0.01%
Zulu		1	0.01%
14808	100.00%		

Appendix 2D4:

EU Settlement Scheme: applications by nationality, region and local authority, 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021 (Countries A-K)

Hertfordshire Districts and Borough comparisons

	Total	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Italy
Broxbourne	9,240	40	40	670	*	110	40	30	20	10	160	130	190	290	*	10	1,580
Dacorum	10,180	30	100	570	*	10	120	70	20	20	340	290	210	400	*	10	860
East Hertfordshire	9,040	40	30	420	20	30	130	50	30	40	330	300	260	310	10	10	1,500
Hertsmere	11,130	30	90	470	30	60	120	40	20	40	360	280	310	370	*	20	720
North Hertfordshire	5,250	10	40	220	10	30	50	60	20	40	360	250	110	230	*	10	750
St Albans	9,130	50	100	370	40	40	150	90	20	80	600	430	440	370	20	20	1,200
Stevenage	6,320	20	40	300	40	30	60	10	10	10	160	210	90	310	*	10	390
Three Rivers	5,590	30	20	200	20	10	50	40	*	40	220	180	70	150	*	*	330
Watford	16,910	40	130	800	20	20	130	50	30	40	500	330	310	720	*	20	1,490
Welwyn Hatfield	12,610	20	100	600	30	80	100	50	20	30	230	250	300	800	10	10	770

* = 1 to 9

EU Settlement Scheme: applications by nationality, region and local authority, 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021 (Countries L-R)

Hertfordshire Districts and Borough comparisons

		Latvia	Liechtenstein	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania
Broxbourne	9,240	170	0	600	*	*	80	*	1,860	290	2,140
Dacorum	10,180	160	0	280	*	10	180	20	1,520	440	3,210
East Hertfordshire	9,040	80	0	230	*	10	180	30	1,470	1,010	1,300
Hertsmere	11,130	70	0	270	*	20	200	20	1,280	530	4,450
North Hertfordshire	5,250	70	0	200	0	*	150	20	980	200	660
St Albans	9,130	50	0	160	*	20	250	40	1,260	530	1,070
Stevenage	6,320	90	0	210	0	*	100	*	1,390	250	1,830
Three Rivers	5,590	50	0	210	*	*	110	30	690	980	1,530
Watford	16,910	150	0	320	20	20	310	20	2,660	1,370	5,120
Welwyn Hatfield	12,610	120	0	370	*	20	170	30	2,640	720	3,870

EU Settlement Scheme: applications by nationality, region and local authority, 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021 (Countries S-Z)

Hertfordshire Districts and Borough comparisons

		Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Non-EEA **
Broxbourne	9,240	80	*	230	40	*	410
Dacorum	10,180	170	*	390	80	30	660
East Hertfordshire	9,040	100	20	660	90	30	300
Hertsmere	11,130	250	10	350	80	20	630
North Hertfordshire	5,250	80	10	320	80	20	250
Repealed Dacorum Albans	9,130	180	*	870	130	60	480
Repealed Stevenage	6,320	110	*	250	30	20	310
Three Rivers	5,590	90	*	180	90	30	220
Watford	16,910	170	20	730	130	20	1,250
Welwyn Hatfield	12,610	200	10	410	70	30	550

* = 1 to 9

** = People from outside of the European Union and European Economic Area (EEA) can be described as “third country” or “non-EEA” nationals. Direct family members are: **spouse, civil partner, dependent children and grandchildren**, of either partner, up to age 21, as well as dependant parents and grandparents of either partner

