

REPORT TO ASSETS AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE COUNCIL OFFICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE



Report Reference A-25-09
Meeting Date 23rd February 2026
Agenda Item 7
Prepared by Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Council Offices Improvement Plan (COIP) working group was established to develop an improvement plan for the Council Offices.

In September, the committee approved the working group recommendations on the issues, scope and objectives for the improvement plan. At that meeting, the working group reported on a proposal to make the rear of the building the primary entrance; the committee directed the working group to review this proposal and retain the front as the main entrance.

2.0 WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The working group has developed revised reconfiguration proposals which retain the front as the primary access. This will necessitate additional external works to install a lift and reconfigure the front steps to provide a level access. The existing Moor Room would become a reception, with access to a lift to the first floor. The detailed plans are evolving, with the working group considering the extent of an extension within the rear courtyard that would be required to provide the required ground floor facilities.

The working group is in the process of developing the specification for works; at its last meeting (December) it agreed works should include:

- All existing wallpaper to be removed and walls to be replastered where necessary
- Where electrical work is undertaken, electrics would not be chased into walls to avoid additional cost
- All redundant cables from around the building should be removed
- The heating system should be renewed (but that if possible the recently replaced boiler would be retained)
- The entrance hall tiles should be retained. There should be tile (or similar) in the reception area), vinyl flooring in toilets/kitchens and carpet (tiles) to all other areas.
- The accessible toilets should include a low-level cleaners sink
- The lift should be controllable to prevent unauthorised use
- The lower front windows should be replaced to match the 12-pane style elsewhere in the building. Windows should ideally be replaced with double glazed units in the same style.

The working group discussed the upper chamber and it was agreed that the dais and oak head table should be retained. It was agreed that the remainder of the old council chamber furniture should not be used in the room to provide greater flexibility for the space. It was agreed that where

possible, the furniture should be repurposed e.g. new furniture made from the existing, either for use in the building or elsewhere.

The next stages are for the working group to develop the specification and appoint professional services to provide input in the development of the plan.

3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should:

- a) Note the update from the working group
- b) Consider endorsing its outputs to date, as set out in section two