

BRIEFING PAPER

CIVIC CENTRE – DESIGN AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES

OCTOBER 2024



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The reoccupation and re-use of the Civic Centre is a priority for the Council. In March 2024, the Council's Cabinet took a decision to re-acquire the building from the current owners (Urban Splash), seek further public sector funding to address the viability challenges and work with City College Plymouth to develop proposals for a new city centre campus in the lower ground floors of the building.

This briefing paper provides a summary on the next phase of work related to the redevelopment of the Civic Centre, which involves the procurement and appointment of consultants to undertake design development work, providing the Council with the expertise and capacity it needs to take forward this project.

These services are essential to move the project forward, to retain the public funding already secured for the Civic Centre and to maximise the Council's ability to secure the other public funding required.

2. BACKGROUND

The reoccupation and re-use of the Civic Centre is a priority for the Council to build confidence in the wider city centre regeneration programme.

Aligned to the growth of the marine and defence industries in Plymouth and to help address the skills shortages in these areas, City College Plymouth (CCP) have brought forward proposals to establish a new city centre campus that would take up all of the commercial space in the building.

In March 2024, the Council's Cabinet agreed to reacquire the building, work with CCP on their proposals for a new city centre campus, seek further public sector funding to address the viability challenges and granted authority to the Service Director for Economic Development in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer to complete the purchase of the building and enter into service and works contracts to progress the project.

To take forward the project in line with the Cabinet decision, a Capital Business Case has been developed for £2.57m to procure and appoint consultants to undertake design development work, providing the Council with the expertise and capacity it needs to take forward this project.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES AND REASONS

The design team will include the full range of services and specialisms required to design and manage work to repair the structure, to re-clad the building, to replace the façade, complete repairs to the roof, and prepare the lower ground floors so that these are ready for fit out and occupation. At the end of this work the shell and core of the 'tower' will also be ready for fit out for residential development.



4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Do Nothing

In the 'Do Nothing' Option, given the viability challenges associated with redeveloping the building, it is certain that the Civic Centre will continue to blight the city centre and the structure will deteriorate further impacting on the Council's aim to regenerate the city centre.

Undertake a limited phase of design work

This option would involve a limited amount of design work to support short term decisions regarding the project. However, on balance the preferred option is to appoint a full design team that can take forward the project over the next 3 years, providing continuity of knowledge and expertise.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISK

The total cost of employing a full design team is estimated to be £2.57m.

The design team appointments will be commissioned through a staged approach with key disciplines appointed first with others to follow. In some instances, the appointments will cover specific phases of work.

6. TIMESCALES

The programme will be confirmed through the work undertaken by the design team but the expectation is the lower ground floors should be ready for occupation by 2028 or 2029.