

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

To: all Members of the Council (via e-mail)
Access Croydon, Town Hall Reception

PUBLIC NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS MADE BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND TREASURY ON 19 JULY 2017

In accordance with the Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules, the following decisions may be implemented from **1300 hours on 27 July 2017** unless referred to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee:

The following apply to each decision listed below

Reasons for these decisions: are contained in the **attached** Part A report

Other options considered and rejected: are contained in the **attached** Part A report

Details of conflicts of Interest declared by the Cabinet Member: none

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet Member the power to make the decisions set out below:

CABINET MEMBER'S EXECUTIVE DECISION REFERENCE NO.: 2017FT

Decision Title: Lease for part ground and first floors Bernard Weatherill House to Department for Work and Pensions

Having carefully read and considered the attached Part A report, the associated confidential part B report, and the requirements of the Council's public sector equality duty in relation to the issues detailed in the body of the reports, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury in consultation with the Leader of the Council

RESOLVED to:

1. Agree that the Council enter into a 10 year lease for the letting of part ground and part first floors of Bernard Weatherill House (BWH) to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and on the terms detailed in the associated Part B report.;
2. Agree that, for the reasons detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report, the Executive Director (Resources) and s151 Officer be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury to make any minor amendments to the terms of the grant of the 10 year lease for part ground and part first floors of BWH considered necessary after the decision has been made.
3. Note that where any amendments are made under this delegation, the amended terms for the 10 year lease for part ground and part first floors of BWH will be published on the Council's website within 1 month of completion of the lease.

Scrutiny Referral/Call-in Procedure

1. The decisions may be implemented **1300 hours on 27 July 2017** (5 working days after the decisions were made) unless referred to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.
2. The Council Solicitor shall refer the matter to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee if so requested by:-
 - i) the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and 4 members of that Committee; or
 - ii) 20% of Council Members (14)
3. The referral shall be made on the approved pro-forma (*attached*) which should be submitted electronically or on paper to Jim Simpson by the deadline stated in this notice. Verification of signatures may be by individual e-mail, fax or by post. A decision may only be subject to the referral process once.
4. The Call-In referral shall be completed giving:
 - i) The grounds for the referral
 - ii) The outcome desired
 - iii) Information required to assist the Scrutiny and Overview Committee to consider the referral
 - iv) The date and the signatures of the Councillors requesting the Call-In
5. The decision taker and the relevant Chief Officer(s) shall be notified of the referral who shall suspend implementation of the decision.
6. The referral shall be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee unless, in view of the Council Solicitor, this would cause undue delay. In such cases the Council Solicitor will consult with the decision taker and the Chair of Scrutiny and Overview to agree a date for an additional meeting. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee may only decide to consider a maximum of 3 referrals at any one meeting.
7. At the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting the referral will be considered by the Committee which shall determine how much time the Committee will give to the call in and how the item will be dealt with including whether or not it wishes to review the decision. If having considered the decision there are still concerns about the decision then the Committee may refer it back to the decision taker for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of the concerns.
8. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee may refer the decision to Full Council if it considers that the decision is outside of the budget and policy framework of the Council.

9. If the Scrutiny and Overview Committee decides that no further action is necessary then the decision may be implemented.
10. The Full Council may decide to take no further action in which case the decision may be implemented.
11. If the Council objects to the decision it can nullify the decision if it is outside of the policy framework and/or inconsistent with the budget.
12. If the decision is within the policy framework and consistent with the budget, the Council will refer any decision to which it objects together with its views on the decision. The decision taker shall choose whether to either amend / withdraw or implement the original decision within 10 working days or at the next meeting of the Cabinet of the referral from the Council.
13. The response shall be notified to all Members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
14. If either the Council or the Scrutiny and Overview Committee fails to meet in accordance with the Council calendar or in accordance with paragraph 6 above, then the decision may be implemented on the next working day after the meeting was scheduled or arranged to take place.
15. **URGENCY:** The referral procedure shall not apply in respect of urgent decisions. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the referral process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. The record of the decision and the notice by which it is made public shall state if the decision is urgent and therefore not subject to the referral process.

Signed: Director of Law and Monitoring Officer.

Date: 19 July 2017

Contact Officers: jim.simpson@croydon.gov.uk; james.haywood@croydon.gov.uk

PROFORMA

REFERRAL OF A KEY DECISION TO THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

For the attention of: Jim Simpson, Democratic Services & Scrutiny
e-mail to jim.simpson@croydon.gov.uk james.haywood@croydon.gov.uk

Meeting:
Meeting Date:
Agenda Item No:

Reasons for referral:

- i) The decision is outside of the Policy Framework
- ii) The decision is inconsistent with the budget
- iii) The decision is inconsistent with another Council Policy
- iv) Other: Please specify:

The outcome desired:

Information required to assist the Scrutiny and Overview Committee to consider the referral:

Signed:

Date:

Member of _____ Committee

Part A For General Release

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT TO:	Cllr Simon Hall Cabinet member for Finance and Treasury
AGENDA ITEM:	Public background document
SUBJECT:	Letting of part ground and part first floors at Bernard Weatherill House
LEAD OFFICER:	Richard Simpson Executive Director (Resources) and s151 Officer
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Simon Hall Cabinet member for Finance and Treasury
WARDS:	Fairfield
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:	

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The letting will secure a significant revenue receipt through the rent and the rate and service charge contributions

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: 2017FT

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury in consultation with the Leader of the Council agree that the Council enter into a 10 year lease for the letting of part ground and part first floors of Bernard Weatherill House (BWH) to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and on the terms detailed in the associated Part B report.
- 1.2 Agree that, for the reasons detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report, the Executive Director (Resources) and s151 Officer be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury to make any minor amendments to the terms of the grant of the 10 year lease for part ground and part first floors of BWH considered necessary after the decision has been made.

Note that where any amendments are made under this delegation, the amended terms for the 10 year lease for part ground and part first floors of BWH will be published on the Council's website within 1 month of completion of the lease.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 As part of the Council's Asset Strategy a review of the occupational office portfolio has been undertaken to maximise its use and revenue generating potential. Through this work it has been identified that up to 4 floors plus ancillary accommodation on the ground and first floors within BWH could be let to third party organisations.
- 2.2 This report is seeking approval for the Council to enter into a 10 year lease of for part of the ground and part first floor of BWH (the accommodation) to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with the Department of Work and Pensions as the occupier
- 2.3 The lease will produce a significant income to the Council through the rent and in addition significant revenue saving through the recovery of rates and service charge payments.
- 2.4 The proposed letting has been agreed after a long period of negotiation and the terms agreed have been based on the rental levels agreed for the other lettings within BWH that have been subject to wider marketing and are therefore considered to represent best consideration.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 With the current financial pressures on the Council it is even more important that the use of the property assets are optimised and used to generate income or a reduction in running costs wherever possible. As part of the Council's Asset Strategy, the Council's occupational portfolio has been reviewed to identify opportunities to release space.
- 3.2 Through adopting a more flexible approach to working and adopting an average 10:6 desk ratio it has been identified that between 50-60,000sq ft of space could be released within BWH. The first phases have allowed the release of the 4 upper floors of BWH. The release of the ancillary space on the ground and first floors will require some additional re-organisation and in respect of the ground floor Access Croydon space will require some organisational changes
- 3.3 The lease to the Tenant will be for around 14,000sqft located on the ground floor community space and part of Access Croydon and on the first floor through the loss of meeting rooms and some flexible working space largely within the annexe area. The main access to the space will utilise the current community space entrance and therefore be largely independent of the remainder of the building. The areas are more particularly shown on the plans attached to this report. The tenants will also be permitted to use the café on the 8th floor but will not have general access to the first floor meeting rooms.

- 3.4 This letting will require considerable work to be carried out and the Council will be undertaking all the necessary alteration works although the fit out costs for DWP will be at their expense. The works are currently being tendered but budget estimates have been provided to inform DWP's business case. The main works being undertaken are:
- Community Space – removal of existing wall to create a largely open plan area.
 - Additional access control works around the annexe entrance and lift areas
 - Access Croydon: very limited works will be undertaken to the building structure but organisational changes and layouts will change to facilitate the release of this space. This will include additional signage to clearly signpost the different services.
 - First floor – annexe space: existing meeting rooms to be removed to create open plan area
 - First Floor – main building: Part of this area currently housing the flexible working space will be reconfigured to create staff and training facilities for DWP. The area will also be securely divided from the remainder of the Council's retained space.
 - First Floor – retained area: Alteration to some of the larger meeting rooms will take place to create additional rooms to help offset the loss of the annexe rooms. Additional flexible working space will also be provided in this area.
 - Braithwaite Hall: Works have already been undertaken to increase the capacity of this space to allow larger events to be held and to promote this for use more by community groups and for larger meetings.

The proposed layout is detailed on the plans appended to this report.

- 3.5 As part of the works to accommodate these changes, access control has already been activated to all floors. A working group has been set up with the Gateway teams to agree and plan for the necessary integration of the DWP within Access Croydon to minimise the impact on Croydon's service delivery and maximise any cross over benefits. The original design of the building permits, under the fire and evacuation strategy, a higher density of use than is existing and the proposed letting will not exceed the maximum occupation for the space being let.
- 3.6 The proposed letting is due to be completed by late December 2017 with a view to DWP relocating their service in January/February 2018. The terms of the letting are detailed in the Part B report as they are commercially sensitive.
- 3.7 Although the terms have been agreed in principle it may be necessary to make minor amendments during the drafting of the lease. A delegated authority has therefore been requested as part of the approval so that these can be dealt with swiftly. Any such amendments will not have a material impact on the overall financial benefits or contractual obligations to the Council

3.8 The space being let is less suitable for commercial use than the upper floors and therefore all discussions regarding the release of these areas has been with other partner organisations. Although this space has not been the terms adopted have broadly been based on the rates agreed through the letting and more widely tested office space for the upper floors and is therefore considered to fairly represent the current market terms and represent best value.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 No consultation outside of the Council has taken place but consultation with all departments directly impacted by these proposals has been undertaken.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1. Risks

Once the letting has been completed the Council will not be able to take the space back for a period of up to 10 years as the lease does not contain a landlord's break option. At the end of the lease the Council would, however, be able to terminate the lease if they required it for their own occupation or some form of redevelopment.

2 Options

This proposal is being put forward as an opportunity to contribute towards the revenue targets. The only other options would be to look towards other tenants as the need to let space has been identified. This is unlikely to generate any greater income and given the partnership working already taking place between DWP and the Croydon's Gateway services any alternatives are likely to offer less advantages.

The covenant strength of the proposed tenant is very good and the terms agreed are a fair reflection of the market terms for offices in Croydon. The letting will also help Croydon residents and enable a more joined up service provision between departments

The space could be retained by the Council and not let but this would not meet the requirements to make best use of the Council's assets

2. Future savings/efficiencies

This long term letting will make a significant contribution towards the annual budgeted income targets during the life of the arrangement.

There is no rent free period .

(Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Director, Finance, Investment and Risk and Insurance and Deputy s151 Officer)

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that in agreeing the basis of the disposal, the Council must be satisfied that it is receiving a fair market value for the asset. The best consideration test and requirements are set out in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(Approved by: Sean Murphy, Principal Corporate Solicitor (Regeneration) on behalf of the Director of Law and Monitoring Officer)

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 The opportunity to release space within BWH has been possible as a result of the review of staff work styles that has been undertaken and the Councils requirement to move towards a more flexible working environment which allows 3:2 desk ratios to be adopted. The letting of this space as outlined will not unduly impact on these changes

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 The original equality impact assessment for the move into BWH was updated as part of the overall Enabling our Workforce project. This fully considered the impact both as a result of the changes to work styles and occupational space within the Council's corporate office accommodation. Consultation has taken place with the Workers Disability Group to ensure that the proposed changes, including the installation of access control arrangements for each floor will take into account the needs of all employees and will not impede access to any areas. The proposal to release the accommodation through entering into a 10 year lease will be considered as part of this work but due to the mitigation works it is not anticipated that it will have any additional impact.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 The increase in the number of people within the building will be in compliance with all statutory requirements. The increased use of this space is not likely to have any environmental impacts and is more sustainable than providing new building to create the necessary space for the tenant to occupy

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 There will be no impact on crime and disorder as a result of the letting.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

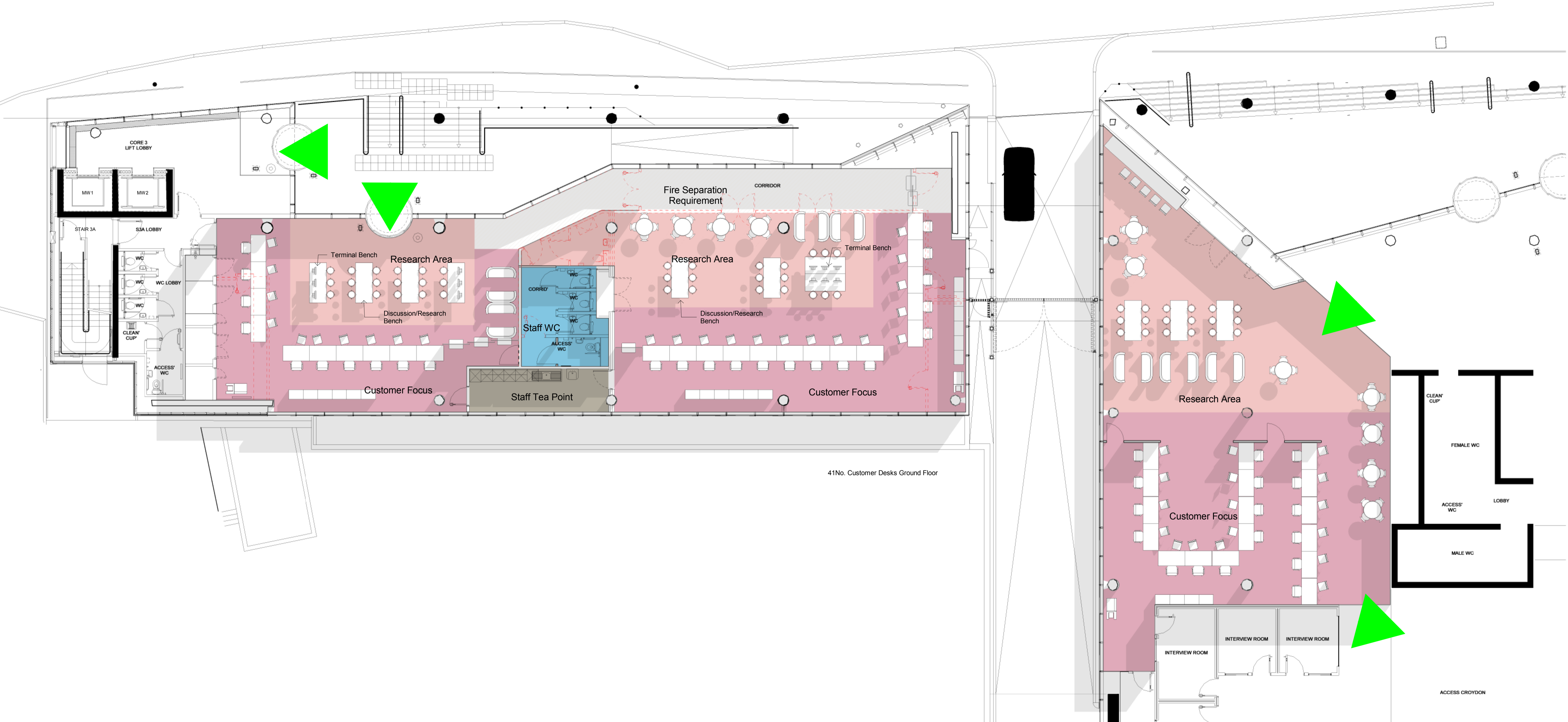
A new 10 year lease for the accommodation will generate a significant financial contribution for the Council and help reduce its revenue costs for the building. The letting will hopefully generate new job opportunities in Croydon in the longer term and allow a more integrated service to be provided for Croydon residents.

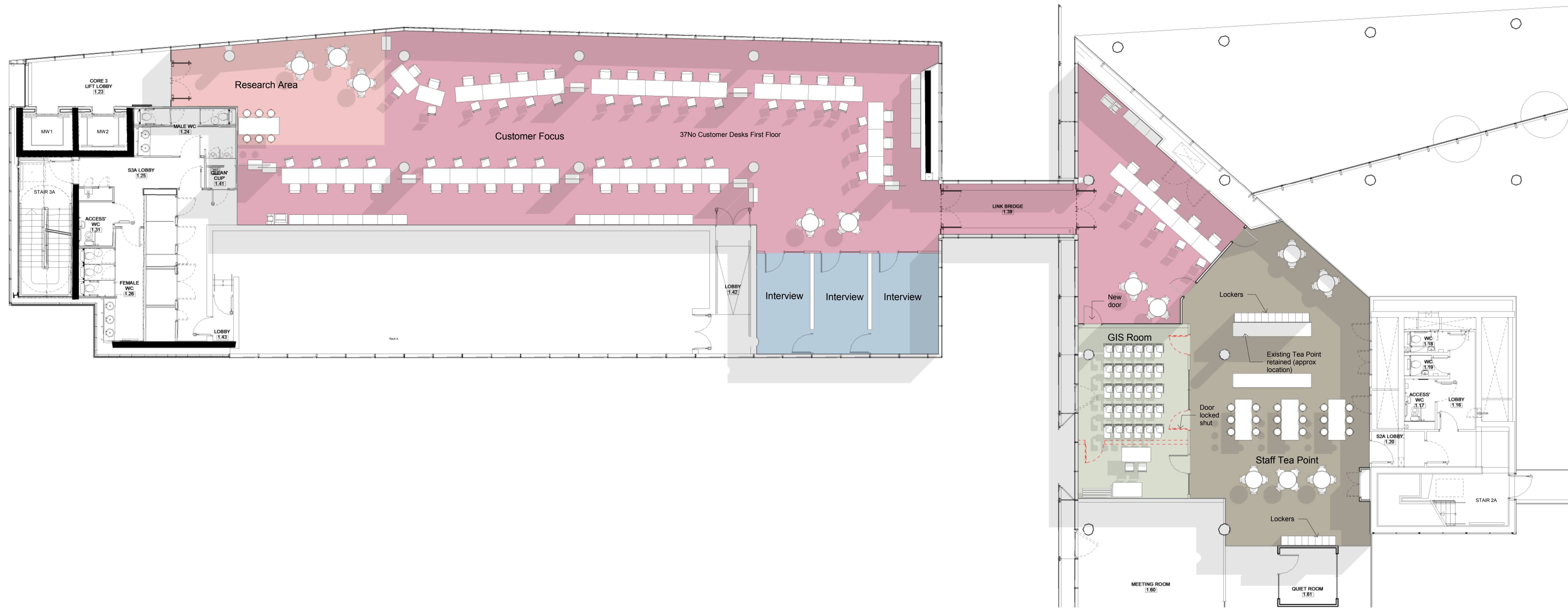
12. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The only alternative option would be to reject the agreed terms on the grounds that they did not represent value for money, the tenant was unsuitable or the Council require the space for their own purposes. The detail provided in the body of the report demonstrates this is not the case,

**CONTACT OFFICER: Steve Wingrave Head of Asset Management and Estates
ext 61512**

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Plans for ground and first floors





B	One desk removed to provide additional escape path and desks to main research area rotated towards lift shaft	sdt	19/1/17
A	Minor alterations to furniture layout	sdt	28/1/16
REV.	DESCRIPTION	APP.	DATE
@	Carter Jonas. Quality Assured to	BS EN ISO 9001:2008	
Ordnance Survey license/customer account number 100018575			

DATE Nov 16
 SCALE 1 : 100@A1
 STATUS Preliminary
 OFFICE Newbury

DRAWN TS
 CHECKED sdt
 APPROVED
 T. 01635 230 220

PROJECT TITLE
**DWP
 Job Centre Plus
 Croydon**

DRAWING TITLE
**Sketch Layout
 First Floor**
 DWG. NO. 4012 SK05 B

Sutton Griffin
 ARCHITECTS
 Part of the Carter Jonas network