

Meeting: Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Date: 3 April 2017

Title: Office Accommodation Review – Update

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Service: Head of Commissioning & Investment

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee received a report at the meeting held on 6 March 2017 which provided an updated position on the office accommodation review.

The purpose of this report is to provide members with the current position associated with the ongoing discussions with the Wallsend Town Forum site which includes Wallsend Customer First Centre.

2. Recommendations

The Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee are asked to note the additional information provided in this report by colleagues from the Business & Economic Development Team linked to Wallsend Customer First Centre as part of the wider Office Accommodation Project.

3. Details

- 3.1 The Council and New River Retail (NRR) have established an excellent working relationship during the regeneration of the Wallsend Town Centre. The refurbishment and investment in Wallsend Forum and the creation of the CFC has seen a rise in footfall of over 20% to the town centre.
- 3.2 The current lease for the Wallsend CFC currently restricts usage of the vacant second floor to that associated with the Council and a particular use class. NRR subsequently sold on their lease to an investment company. The terms of the lease require their consent for any changes, with a premium payment to be made should the Council wish to vary the terms of the lease to permit sub letting. Permission could be withheld to sub let, although NRR have said they would work with the Council to encourage the investment company to release this clause.

- 3.3 This is all predicated on the Northumbria Care Trust receiving the green light for funding to develop a new health care facility on the Wallsend Forum Car Park (Site 2D). This will relocate three separate doctors' surgeries from around Wallsend in to one location. A bid was submitted in Autumn 2016. They had hoped to submit a planning application by now, ready for build start in Spring 2017. However, the Clinical Commissioning Group have requested changes to the funding profile to be made. These were actioned in December 2016, but the CCG have yet to make a decision on the award of funding.
- 3.4 Officers and NRR are due to meet the CCG management team on Monday 27th March 2017 to explore any issues relating to the advancement of the funding and the project. An additional addendum updated report will be provided to members of Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee following the meeting.