

## Dewsbury Town Board | Extraordinary Meeting – 26 March 2025

### **Acquisition of strategic property**

This is a public report with a private appendix.

Exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It was considered that the disclosure of the information would be contrary to confidential terms and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and providing greater openness and transparency in relation to public expenditure in the Council's decision making.

#### **1.1 Background**

It is considered that the acquisition and repair of a strategic property using Building Grant Revival Scheme (BGRS) funding is the best option to help safeguard investment in the town.

#### **1.2 Progress**

As requested by Board, discussions regarding the acquisition and repair of the building with MHCLG have taken place, they agreed this was within scope of the BGRS as the funds are intended to support the reinstatement of shop fronts to support wider regeneration and improve the image and appearance of the town centre.

As part of the council's assurance process the recommendation to negotiate with the owners for the purchase of the property was discussed at the Council's Town Centre Programme Board.

Negotiations with the owner have taken place and a purchase price has been agreed.

#### **1.4 Capital Costs**

It is proposed that the property is acquired, and a basic refurbishment is undertaken to ensure the building is repaired and made secure and watertight. Proposed works include: frontage render repair, shop front repair & repaint, window repair/replacement, ventilation for cellar, roof and gutter repair, plaster repair, and adding vinyl / artwork to the window to promote projects in the town. This does not include works to make the building useable in the short-term, but it suggested that forms part of future planning as noted in Section 1.6.

The estimated capital costs for these works are detailed in Private Appendix A, and it is proposed that the BGRS allocation is used to fund these works.

#### **1.5 Revenue Costs**

There would be annual revenue cost associated with the Council holding the property. It is anticipated this would be for a maximum of five years with a view to renovating and selling or leasing the space as part of future plans.

The estimated revenue costs are detailed in Private Appendix A, and it is proposed that the Plan for Neighbourhoods (previously Long-Term Plan for Towns) allocation is used to fund this.

### **1.6 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Town Board:

1. Note the content of this Report
2. Confirm support for the acquisition and repair of the property using BGRS funds as part of the Town Deal allocation
3. Subject to Recommendation 2, confirm support for the use of Plan for Neighbourhoods revenue funds for annual holding costs
4. Subject to Recommendation 2 and 3, commit to further investment in the property as part of the Regeneration Plan (under Plan for Neighbourhoods fund) to facilitate the renovation and sale or lease of the property in the future.