

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

RESOURCES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1 FEBRUARY 2005

REPORT OF BRAD FLEET, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

**REBUILDING AND LEASING OF THE REGISTRY OFFICE IN THE
GROUNDS OF BROWFORT**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Registry Office was damaged by a falling tree early in 2004 and due to the dangerous condition of the building the majority of it was demolished shortly thereafter. This report seeks authority to rebuild the structure to a slightly different design and also seeks authority to enter into a 12-year lease with the County Council for the replacement building.

2 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 There are no staffing implications stemming from this report but if Members agree the recommendation this Council will receive rental income from the County Council for the rebuilt building.

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following the damage to the Registry Office the Council's insurers agreed to pay for a "like for like" structure to replace it. Whilst this is acceptable to the District Council, the County Council, which previously occupied the building, had a number of concerns about the original structure and its layout. In particular there were no toilet facilities for visiting members of the public and there were difficulties in complying with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 3.2 To overcome this problem negotiations have been ongoing with the County Council to produce a design which is mutually acceptable. These negotiations have now reached a head and a scheme has been drafted which provides improved facilities for the County Council but which will also results in a more marketable property asset for the District Council.

4 REASON FOR THE REPORT

- 4.1 Under the current scheme of delegation to the Director of Community Services there is no authority to commission a replacement building of a different design. This report therefore seeks Committee authority to agree to the rebuild of the Registry Office to a different design from the original structure.
- 4.2 In addition to the above, the design changes requested by the County Council will inevitably result in the rebuild costs exceeding the insurance payment. In view of this, the County Council has stated that it will underwrite any shortfall, but before doing so would like the security of a 12-year lease to ensure that it benefits from the works. The current scheme of delegation to the Director of Community Services does not allow for leases other than short-term ones to be entered into and hence Committee authority is again sought to enter into a 12-year lease with the County Council for the rebuilt Registry Office.
- 4.3 Members should note that the proposed lease has been negotiated by the Council's commercial property consultants in the normal manner, and is fully competitive.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Officers are confident that the new design will result in a more usable building compliant with modern legislation, and the improvements will result in a property asset which is more marketable in the long term, if for example the County Council wish to vacate after the 12-year period.
- 5.2 Officers are also satisfied that a 12-year lease to the County Council is acceptable and would generate a much welcomed medium term income stream. It is therefore recommended that :-
- a. Delegated authority is granted to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Council's property advisor to agree for construction to commence on a replacement Registry Office to a design which differs from the original structure.
 - b. Delegated authority is granted to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Resources and the Council's property advisors to agree to a 12-year lease for the rebuilt structure.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES