

KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- FC22/40

Committee:-	Finance and Governance Committee
Date:-	28 th September 2022
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Clerk
Report Title:-	Office relocation costs
Wards Affected:-	None

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval to incur expenditure on the office relocation.

2. Recommendations

That

- a) The quote by company A in respect of removal costs be accepted
- b) Authority be given to the clerk to acquire a small fridge and additional desk and chair from the remaining accommodation and office admin budgets
- c) NNC be asked to permit the current Mayoral safe to be left where it is until April 2023, to allow the Council to budget for a replacement safe - and make the necessary adjustments to the insurance policy - from its 2023/24 budget, and that access to that safe be sought for the duration during normal office hours.
- d) Failing that, the items in the current safe be stored in a self storage facility
- e) To note the revised rental charge proposed by Kettering Conference Centre

3. Information

3.1. Following the last meeting, removal quotes were sought from three local companies (Metro Removals, TD Removals and Northants Removals) to move the contents of the office and the Mayor's Parlour from their current location to Kettering Conference Centre. All figures exclude VAT.

The quotes received were

Company A	£1350
Company B	£1610
Company C	no response

- 3.2. Only company C said they were prepared to try to move the mayoral safe but it is unlikely that it could be accommodated at KCC, given its weight, and therefore quotes have also be sought for a replacement safe. To secure a safe tall or long enough to accommodate the mace and the mace stand, and the chains, requires something measuring 1.5m x 1m x 0.5m and an insurance rating of £17,500 (that is, it can store valuables of £175,000). Initial research suggest that it will be some £3500 to acquire a safe that is secure enough and yet also capable of being moved to and located on an upper floor at KCC.
- 3.3. The new offices will need to be furnished and equipped to compensate for the loss of a kitchen facility and to provide a second desk for the deputy clerk, who has made do with the office table to date.
- 3.4. Finally, audio-visual equipment for the new meeting venue needs to be acquired, in the shape of a compatible projector, screen and audio facility. At this stage, a set of microphones may be unaffordable, so has not been explored.
- 3.5. Kettering Conference Centre has confirmed the rent of the new office as £525 per month. This is higher than their original quotation reported to the last meeting of £480, the reason cited being energy costs.

4. Consultation and Engagement

None required

5. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1. The cost of removals and office equipment can be met from within the overall accommodation budget this year – there is £12,000 in the budget, against which are the cost of the current office (£7000), the new office (£2500) and meeting room hire from the Toller (£500), leaving £2000. A further £400 was set aside in the office budget for new office equipment. Altogether the likely costs of a fridge, desk and chair amounts to £750, leaving headroom of about £300.
- 5.2. The cost of audio-visual equipment has yet to be established.
- 5.3. The cost of a new safe has obviously not been included in the budget and is significant. In the very short term, it might be possible to agree with NNC that the current safe and its contents are left where they are for a further six months, so that provision can be made in the budget for 2023/24 to acquire a new safe, with the ability by the Town Council to access the contents during normal office hours.
- 5.4. An alternative option is to hire a space in a secure vault – or self storage facility. This would be a bit more inconvenient and increase staff hours on Mayoral functions, but would be very

cheap in comparison to buying a safe One local facility would charge £350-£450 per annum. This approach may however increase the Council's insurance premium.

5.5. There is, anyway, likely to be a change to the council's insurance policy once the move has taken place which may be another reason for delaying the move of the safe until April 2023, before which quotes for a new insurance policy can be secured on the basis of the likely longer term storage and security arrangements in place.

5.6. The mace, chains, regalia and plate is insured for approximately £185000.

5.7. The higher rental costs can still be met from within the estimate for accommodation charges.

6. Policy Implications

6.1. The Council exists:-

- To understand what local people want and aspire to
- To provide services not already delivered by statutory bodies, where there is an unmet need
- To represent its area to other service providers
- To provide leadership to its community
- To provide civic pride and presence

6.2. The Council will function as efficiently and effectively as it can, as a steward of the public money with which it is entrusted.

Background Papers

Quotations received.