Notice of:	**EXECUTIVE**
Decision Number:	EX23/2019
Relevant Officers:	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs)
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2019

TALBOT GATEWAY OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 This report has been written to facilitate a potential specific demand for grade 'A' office accommodation in the Town Centre and to determine the additional resources required to carry out feasibility studies and initial designs to identify how the demand can be provided.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To authorise expenditure to the sum of up to £1,250,000 to carry out concept and initial designs for the most appropriate option to meet this future potential demand.

2.2 To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to authorise expenditure and contracts to produce concept and initial designs within the financial limit agreed in 2.1 and the detailed estimates in Appendix 10d, to the Executive report.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Council is looking to bring forward more office-based developments through relocation or inward investment into the Town Centre as part of the Talbot Gateway Masterplan. Whilst discussions are underway regarding several possible opportunities none are yet at the stage where they can be announced and caution is naturally exercised on such matters as such inquiries often come and go. Nevertheless, it is vital that the Council is in a position to respond quickly to the potential implications of such opportunities should they arise and where a sufficient commitment is made to warrant the Council committing resource to secure any such developments that meet the Council's strategic objectives for Talbot Gateway.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b	Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget?	Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None as this works build on the previous work of the Talbot Gateway development.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "The economy: maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

5.0 **Background Information**

5.1 The first phase of Talbot Gateway Central Business District which was completed in 2014 saw £80 million of investment with over 1,000 employees brought into the town centre based in Grade 'A1' office accommodation with accompanying retail units, the construction of a flagship Sainsbury's store, the refurbished of Talbot multi-storey car park and the provision of much improved traffic management and public spaces in the surrounding area.

5.2 Talbot Gateway Phase 2 is set to commence in 2020 with the demolition of the Wilko building, the construction of a new 4 star hotel, the completion of the tramway extension and a transport interchange (connecting the tram to the rail system).

5.3 In December 2018, Slater Gordon Motor Insurance moved into the first floor of Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square building bringing a further 260 full and part-time employees into the town centre

5.4 As a result of this success, the Council is looking to bring forward more office-based developments to increase footfall in the town centre and support the town's economic growth. This will be achieved through either relocation or inward investment into the Town Centre as part of the Talbot Gateway Masterplan.

5.5 Talbot Gateway Phase 3 has a potential inquiry to accommodate a large office development and if it were to materialise it is vital that the opportunity is not lost.

5.6 The priority for the Talbot Gateway is to secure more high quality jobs not only to expand and drive footfall into the town centre (with the knock on effects of encouraging the upgrading of the town centre retail and restaurant facilities) but also to secure and increase job opportunities for local residents.

5.7 Additional background information in relation to the project is included in Appendices 10a, 10b, 10c and 10d, to the Executive report. Due to the ongoing negotiations at the time of publication these documents are not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered on balance that the public interest would be not served by publishing information at this stage. It is anticipated some elements of these documents will be published as the strategy is implemented.

5.8 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.9 List of Appendices:

Appendix 10a: Assessment of Options (exempt)
Appendix 10b: Proposal Document to Potential Occupier (exempt)
Appendix 10c: Plan of Options (exempt)
Appendix 10d: Legal and Financial Considerations (exempt)

6.0 Legal Considerations:

6.1 These are outlined in Appendix 10d, to the Executive report which is exempt from publication.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 Details with regards to human resources will be undertaken in due course.

8.0 Equalities Considerations:

8.1 Any future car park provision will include spaces for disabled persons

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 See Appendix 10d, to the Executive report - exempt which sets out the basis on which a provision of up to £1,250,000 is sought from the Capital Programme based on the estimated costs of providing concept and initial designs up to a RIBA Stage 3.

9.2 It should be emphasised however that in line with the reason for recommendation at 3.1 above, resources will be committed by the Council in line with a sufficient commitment being made by developers and caution will be exercised to protect the Council's financial interests.

9.3 Further reports will be presented as work on this scheme progresses and if any additional financial resource is required to progress the scheme beyond the design to RIBA Stage

10.0 Risk Management considerations:

10.1 The primary risk is that if the Council is unable to progress negotiations and produce initial designs an opportunity for further development may be lost and potentially undermine the huge economic benefits that will be delivered by the Growth and Prosperity Programme and the implementation of the Talbot Gateway Masterplan.

10.2 It should be emphasised however that in line with the reason for recommendation at 3.1 above and the financial considerations at 9.2, resources will be committed by the Council in line with a sufficient commitment being made by developers and caution will be exercised to protect the Council's interests.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal / External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Due to the commercial sensitivity of the project, consultation has been restricted to date. Wider consultation will take place following and subject to the agreement of the Executive to proceed with the proposals.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1	Is this a key decision?	Yes
14.2	If so, Forward Plan reference number:	1/2018
14.3	If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days?	No
14.4	If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:	

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: 15 February 2019 Date approved: N/A

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1 None.

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

1. To agree that Appendix 10a Assessment of Options, Appendix 10b Proposal Document to Potential Occupier, Appendix 10c Plan of Options and Appendix 10d Legal and Financial Considerations, to the Executive report, are not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

2. To authorise expenditure to the sum of up to £1,250,000 to carry out concept and initial designs for the most appropriate option to meet this future potential demand.

3. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to authorise expenditure and contracts to produce concept and initial designs within the financial limit agreed in 1 and the detailed estimates in Appendix 10d, to the Executive report.

18.2 **Date of Decision:**

25 February 2019

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

The Council is looking to bring forward more office-based developments through relocation or inward investment into the Town Centre as part of the Talbot Gateway Masterplan. Whilst discussions are underway regarding several possible opportunities none are yet at the stage where they can be announced and caution is naturally exercised on such matters as such inquiries often come and go. Nevertheless, it is vital that the Council is in a position to respond quickly to the potential implications of such opportunities should they arise and where a sufficient commitment is made to warrant the Council committing resource to secure any such developments that meet the Council's strategic objectives for Talbot Gateway.

19.1 **Date Decision published:**

26 February 2019

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1 Councillor Campbell, in the Chair

Councillors Benson Cain, Cross, Jackson, Kirkland, Smith, I Taylor

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1