

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted: none

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Enterprise

1. DECISION TAKEN

Grant of a temporary licence arrangement of 6 months to Cash Access UK of two rooms within the Royston Town Hall annex to provide a temporary banking hub.

2. DECISION TAKER

Philip Doggett, Principal Estates Surveyor

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

14th August 2024

4. REASON FOR DECISION

Lloyds Bank are due to close the last bank in Royston on 25th September and the town would then be without banking services. Royston Town Council were approached about the use of two rooms for the banking hub within the annexe, which is owned by North Herts Council, but managed by Royston Town Council. The two rooms have an external door which would provide direct access for the public without access being required through the annexe. The annexe also houses the Citizens Advice Centre, Royston Bid, Royston Town Council, and the parking manager also has an office in the building.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Cash Access UK were unable to find other premises that are suitable and available on a temporary basis. Their intention is to occupy a building on a permanent basis, and it is likely that this will be the building currently occupied by Lloyds bank once the building has been vacated and an agreement can be reached and finalised. The annex is not suitable as a permanent solution but should suffice on a temporary basis. North Herts Council does not have any other properties that are suitable for occupation particularly in the timescale required.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

Royston Town Council held 2 meetings with Cash Access UK, regarding the proposed banking hub on Tuesday 9th April 2024 and Monday 3rd June 2024. Several Town Councillors, District Councillors and County Councillors attended one or both the meetings and were fully supportive of setting up both a temporary banking hub and a permanent banking hub in Royston. The mayor is also fully supportive of the proposal.

All the Ward Councillors in Royston have recently been contacted by email and whilst some members may have been on holiday the messages received in response have been fully supportive of the proposal.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Cash Access UK is a not-for-profit company owned and funded by nine major high street banks. The banking hub offers a counter service operated by the Post Office and a community banking service where customers can talk to their own banking provider on a rotation basis. Cash Access UK are setting up banking hubs in numerous towns throughout the Country where banks have closed their branches. According to Cash Access UK 56 banking hubs have been opened since January 2022 with a further 76 planned.

With the closure of the Lloyds Bank in September this would leave the town with no banking facilities.

Cash Access UK searched within the town for a suitable location for a temporary banking hub and consulted Royston Town Council. Use of two rooms within the annexe is the best solution currently available.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. This delegation is made under section 14.6.2(c) of the Scheme in the Constitution. The Scheme and the delegation operate under Section 9E of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and all other enabling powers applicable to the Council.
- 9.2. The Service Director for Enterprise has sub-delegated the following powers to the Principal Estates Surveyor: The Granting, negotiating and settling terms of leases, licences, easements, wayleaves, rent reviews, assignment of leases, the appointment of arbitrators / experts, consents, guarantees and all other minor land matters where the initial annual rent (after the expiry of any rent free period) does not exceed £25,000 or the calculation of the premium is based on an annual rent not exceeding £25,000
- 9.3. The licence will commit the Council to allow the use of the two rooms by Cash Access UK as banking hub for a minimum period of 6 months.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cash Access UK Limited will pay the Council a licence fee, which includes rates and all services.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2. The licence arrangement is still to be signed but is close to being in a final form, but there is a small risk it will not be completed.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no equalities implications.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision. However, providing a banking hub in the annexe will clearly be of great benefit to the public in Royston.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15.1 No Human resource implications.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 No background papers.

17. APPENDICES

17.1 No appendices.

NOTIFICATION DATE

15th August 2024

Signature of Executive Member ConsultedNot applicable.

Date: 14th August 2024

Signature of Decision Taker



Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS