

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET29 August 2019Report by Director of EnvironmentPROPOSED LICENCE TO OCCUPY OFFICE ACCOMMODATION 14 LOWNDES STREET, BARRHEAD**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval of the terms and conditions for a proposed licence to occupy office accommodation at 14 Lowndes Street, Barrhead to East Renfrewshire Foodbank.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Cabinet is asked to approve the Environment Department's proposal to grant a licence to occupy the ground floor of 14 Lowndes Street to East Renfrewshire Foodbank and delegate to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement), to finalise negotiations and conclude the licence to occupy.

BACKGROUND AND REPORT

3. East Renfrewshire Foodbank currently run their operation from the former St Andrews Parish Church. This property is due to be redeveloped and the Foodbank has to find an alternative location. The Foodbank has approached the Council seeking accommodation in Barrhead. Potential space has been identified within the offices at 14 Lowndes Street, Barrhead utilising the ground floor of the property.

4. East Renfrewshire Foodbank has been open for over five years under the umbrella organisation of the Trussell Trust.

5. The foodbank is ordinarily open to customers two days per week. However, the facility is operated by volunteers daily from 9 until 5 carrying out stock replenishing and preparation of care packages for customers.

6. Generally around 45 families per week are provided with assistance. Customers are not limited to Barrhead. They come from across the council area.

7. Volume of stock is currently around 8 tonnes. However, this can increase to around 12 tonnes during festive periods. Property Services has arranged for a structural engineer to assess the floor loadings and a suitable layout will be provided to ensure safe storage.

8. The proposed duration of the licence to occupy would be 3 years.

9. The property is currently underutilised. This proposal will allow the building to become fully occupied with Work East Ren moving into the upper floor. This will give a synergy of use and provide a one stop shop for clients. This one stop approach will positively contribute to mitigating the causes of social exclusion and poverty, including child poverty and will enhance those employability and support services currently being delivered in the area and in particular the new Poverty and Social Inclusion programme which is part financed by the European Social Fund and the Council.

10. Given the nature of the organisation it is proposed that the licence should be on a rent free basis.

11. The Foodbank would be responsible for rates (although exempt under charitable status) together with utilities costs and insurance (buildings and personal liability).

12. The Council would continue to cover the cost of maintenance of the property.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

13. The Council will benefit from a reduction in rates payable of £5,000 per annum due to the Foodbank covering this cost with their charitable status.

CONSULTATION

14. Consultation has been undertaken with the Environment Department and Work EastRen.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

15. Partnership working is expected with the colocation of the Work EastRen Team within the building.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

16. There are no implications of the proposals specifically in terms of staffing, property, legal, IT, equalities and sustainability.

CONCLUSIONS

17. The use of this property to provide a location for the East Renfrewshire Foodbank will provide much needed assistance for families in East Renfrewshire currently in food poverty, whilst repurposing an underused building and co-locating appropriate services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from Andrew Corry Head of Environment (Operational Services), 0141 577 3458 or Andrew.corry@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Convener contact details

Councillor Tony Buchanan
(Leader of the Council)

Office: 0141 577 3107
Mobile: 07976 360398

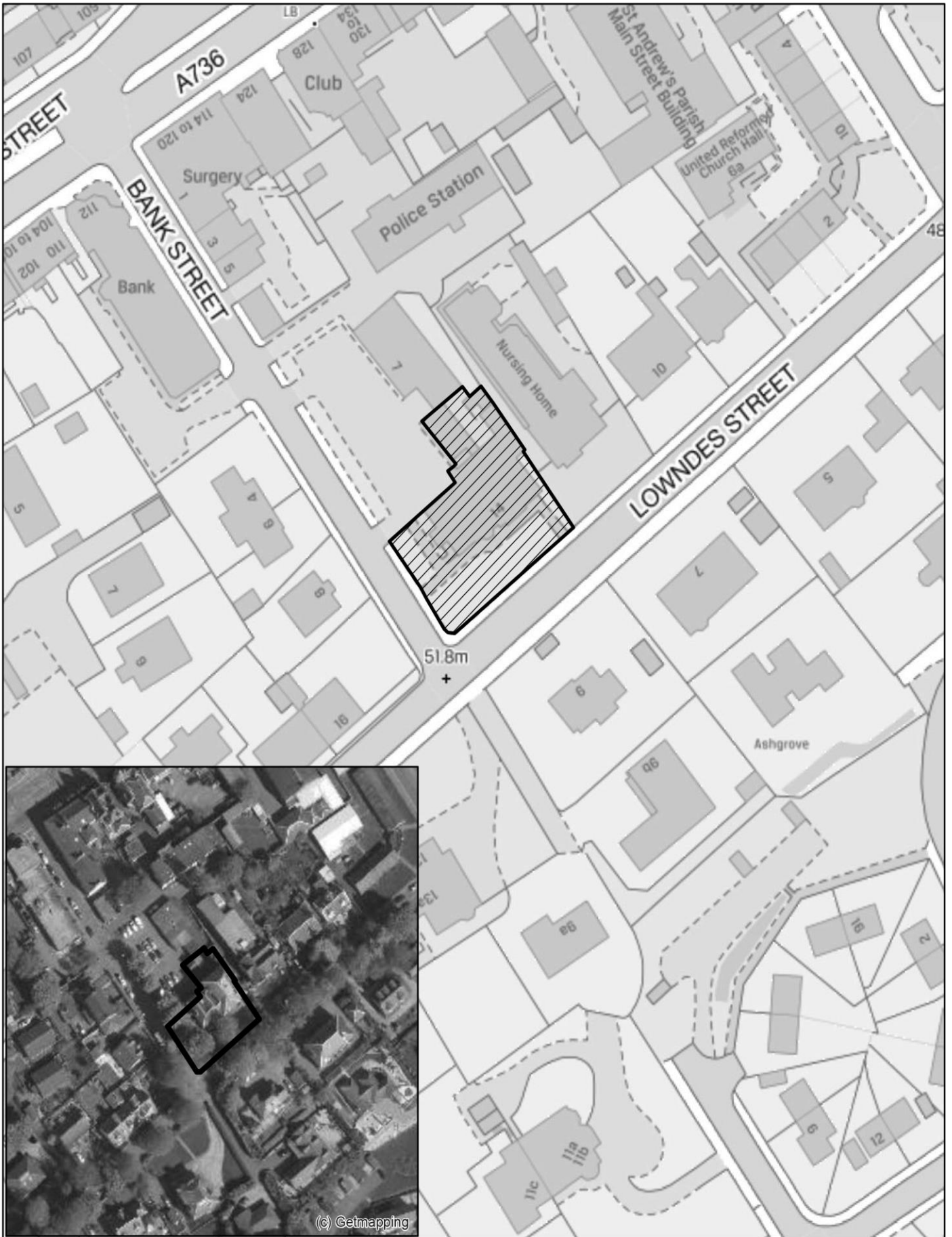
August 2019

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