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MINUTES OF the 396th MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST 2026

Present: Cllr Reed in the Chair Francesca Pridding – Locum Clerk to the Council
Natalie Carter- Administrative Assistant to the Clerk

Cllrs Barnes, Bichard, Cole, Gallagher, Hollands, Jolowicz, Montague, Parikh and Williamson.

Voting Members: 10

CC2763/26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Jowers, Kyriakou, Osler, Parks, Sian and Stungo.

CC2764/26 Declarations of Interest by Members

The Chair recommended that any declarations be made at the appropriate time.

CC2765/26 Public and Press

The Chair moved, duly seconded, the following motion and it was agreed:

that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

CC2766/26 Red Cross Building Lease Agreement

Cllr Reed updated members on recent discussions.

The Locum Clerk presented the Officer Report to Members.

Resolved:

That Council approves the motion at CC2766/26, treating £30,000 per annum as a maximum rather than a target, and instructs the Proper Officer to resolve, before any lease is signed:

- Agreement of an appropriate term of years, informed by updated advice from Stimpsons and a valuation prepared on the term actually agreed;
- The identity and covenant strength of Three Rivers Homes Limited as landlord;
- The future of the Council's own 1993 lease (surrender, asset transfer, or consideration), to complete alongside the new lease;
- Formal legal advice on the potential community hall rent argument, and how it interacts with TRDC's best value duty;

- A rent review structure including a cap, and a mechanism for reduction if the rent is shown to be servicing development finance; and
- Written confirmation from TRDC of the CIL grant, rent subsidy, and special expenses position surviving reorganisation, and whether a Section 24 direction applies.
- To approve a maximum rental figure of £30,000 per annum, subject to negotiation by the Proper Officer of all other terms of the lease, including term of years, rent review mechanism, repairing obligations, service charge, business rates, insurance, fit-out responsibilities, and the treatment of the hall and office.

CC2767/26 Closure

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 7.51pm.