

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Chief Officer responsible for Legal and Democratic Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 working days have passed and the Chief Officer responsible for Legal and Democratic Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

- (1) That the new letting of Unit 59 Murdock Road, Murdock Road Industrial Estate, as outlined in Confidential Appendix B to the attached report prepared to accompany this decision, be approved.**
- (2) That the Head of Regeneration & Property be authorised to finalise the terms of the letting and enter into the lease agreement in accordance with the key terms set out in this report subject to appropriate legal advice.**

2. Date of decision

11 September 2026

3. Reasons for decision

To enable the New Letting of Unit 59 Murdock Road, Bedford. The proposed letting will enable occupation of an otherwise vacant unit and secure a sustainable, market-level commercial return for the Council while successfully eliminating ongoing void liabilities.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

The alternative option of not letting to the proposed tenant was considered and rejected as the unit has remained vacant since March 2026 and letting the property will produce income for the Council. Leaving the property void incurs ongoing business rates liabilities, and loss of commercial rental income for the Council. It also does not support business growth and development. It is, therefore, recommended that the new tenancy be granted.

5. How decision is to be funded

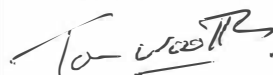
The proposed letting will generate a rental income to the Council, as well as placing the liability for business rates and service charge onto the tenant.

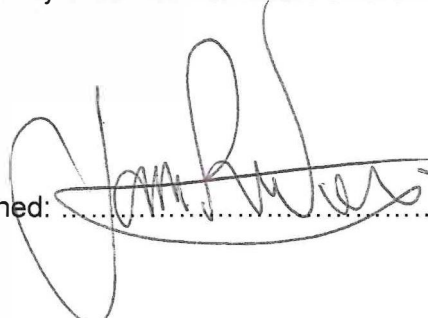
6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

11 September 2026



Signed: 

Date: **11 September 2026**

Name of Decision Taker: **Cllr. Jim Weir**
Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
& External Relations

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Chief Officer responsible for Legal and Democratic Services as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published: **11 September 2026**.....

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: **22 September 2026**.....

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....NO.....)

Bedford Borough Council – Report to Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & External Relations

Date of Report: 11 September 2026

Report by: Head of Regeneration & Property

Subject: NEW LETTING – UNIT 59 MURDOCK ROAD, MURDOCK ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BEDFORD, MK41 7PL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the letting of Unit 59 Murdock Road, Bedford outlined red on the plan at **Appendix A**

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & External Relations (including Property/Asset Management) is invited to consider the report and, if satisfied, to:

- 2.1 Approve the proposed letting of Unit 59 Murdock Road, to Mr. Mirza Humza Taj, on the terms outlined in the Heads of Terms at Confidential **Appendix B**.
- 2.2 Authorise the Head of Regeneration & Property to finalise the terms of the letting and enter into the lease agreement in accordance with the key terms set out in this report subject to appropriate legal advice.

3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 This report seeks approval for Mr. Mirza Humza Taj to become the tenant of Unit 59 Murdock Road, Bedford. The proposed letting will enable occupation of an otherwise vacant unit and secure a sustainable, market-level commercial income stream for the Council while successfully eliminating ongoing void liabilities.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The subject unit is currently empty and, therefore, the Council is liable for the cost of weekly vacant inspections and empty property business rates. Following marketing, a new tenant has now been found and heads of agreement agreed for the proposed tenancy.

5. DETAILS

- 5.1 The unit is located on the Murdock Road Industrial Estate and totals 1,105 sq. ft.
- 5.2 The proposed tenant has passed all necessary checks and meets the requirements to grant a new letting. This will support growth for the business and resulting in an empty space being occupied. The Heads of Terms are outlined in Confidential **Appendix B**.

6. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 6.1 The alternative option of not letting to the proposed tenant has been considered but rejected as the unit has remained vacant since March 2026. Leaving the property vacant incurs ongoing business rates liabilities, security costs, and loss of commercial rental income. It does not support business growth and development. It is, therefore, recommended that the new tenancy be granted.

7. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 **Legal Issues:** Local authorities are given powers under the 1972 Act to dispose of land in any manner they wish, including granting a lease. The only constraint is that a disposal must be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable except in the case of short tenancies, which is defined as terms under 7 years. The proposed letting will, however, be on market terms which satisfies best consideration. The standard form of lease will be used for this letting. The Councils in-house Legal Team will be preparing the relevant legal documentation for this letting.
- 7.2 **Policy Issues:** Stimulating economic growth, financial stability and optimising assets are key priorities established within the Council's Corporate Plan and its Asset Management Strategy. The proposal to let space to is consistent with Theme 2, Strong Financial Stewardships and Theme 5, Supporting and Driving Economic Growth.
- 7.3 **Resource Issues:** The proposed letting will generate additional rental income to the Council, as well as placing the liability for business rates and service charge onto the tenant which will avoid these costs falling on the Council. It will also alleviate resource issues on the Estates Team by not having to carry out weekly vacant inspections on the property.

- 7.4 **Risks:** Due diligence checks have been completed to minimise the risks associated with a new tenancy.
- 7.5 **Environmental Implications:** The letting complies with relevant environmental legislation, in particular Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES).
- 7.6 **Equalities Impact:** In preparing this report, consideration has been given to the Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. The activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, promote good relations, promote positive attitudes and eliminate unlawful discrimination. An equality impact assessment is not needed.
- 7.7 **Impact on Families:** There are no identified impacts arising out of the recommendations of this report.
- 7.8 **Community Safety and Resilience:** There are no identified impacts on community safety and resilience arising out of the recommendations of this report.
- 7.9 **Impact on Health and Wellbeing:** There are no identified impacts on health and wellbeing arising out of the recommendations of this report.

8. **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND OUTCOME**

- 8.1 The following Councillors, Council units, Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

The Mayor
Manager for Estates
Finance
Legal Services

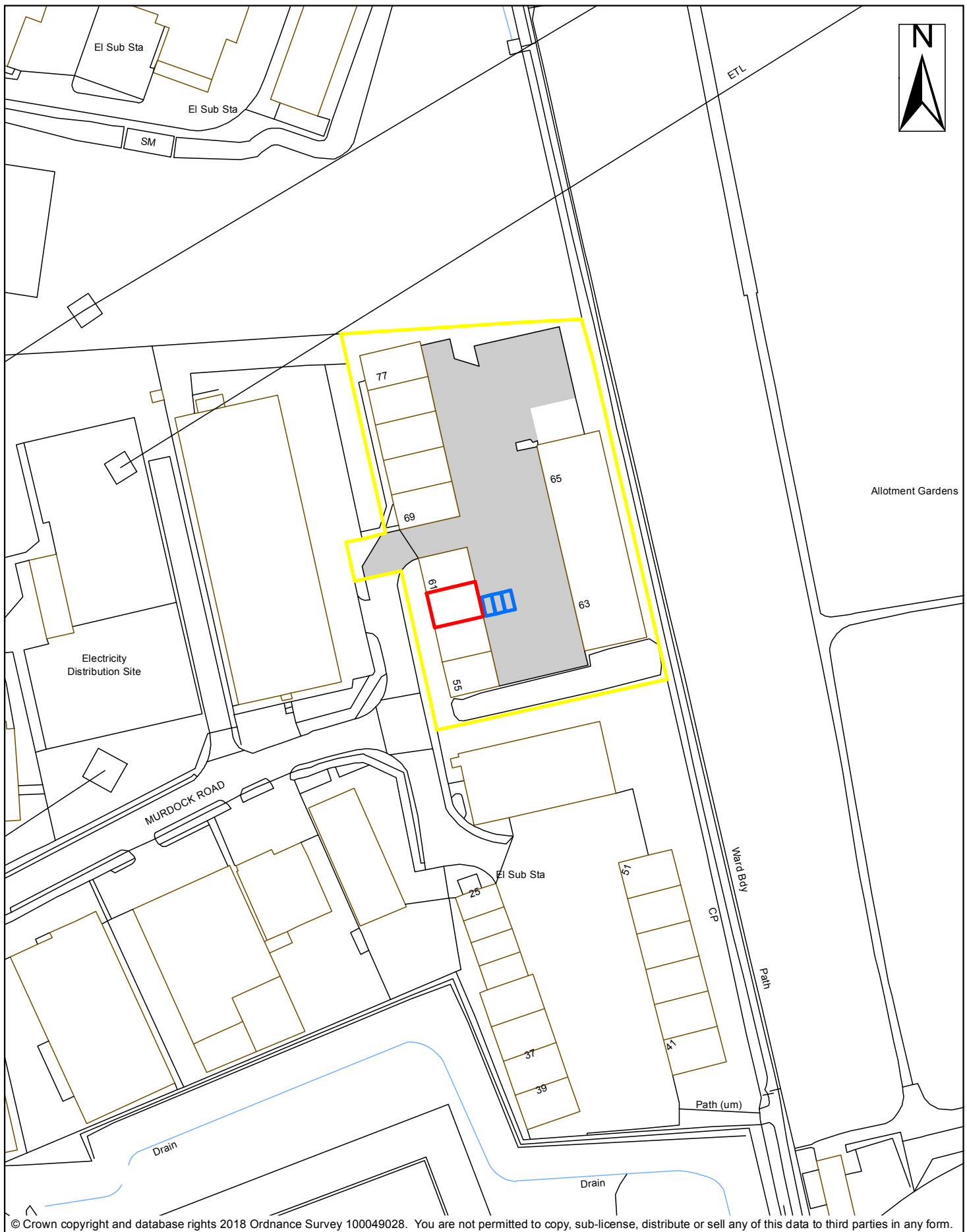
- 8.2 No adverse comments have been received.

9. **WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS**

- 9.1 Ward Councillors have been made aware of this potential new tenancy.

10. CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

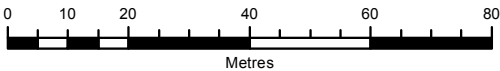
Report Contact Officer:	<i>Jessica Brazier, Technical Estate Surveyor</i> Jessica.brazier@bedford.gov.uk
Declarations of Interest by the Report Author:	<i>None</i>
File Reference:	<i>None</i>
Previous Relevant Minutes:	<i>None</i>
Background Papers:	<i>None</i>
Appendices:	<i>Appendix A – Lease Plan</i> <i>Appendix B – Terms of Letting [Confidential]</i> <i>[Not for publication (Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a to the Local Government Act 1972). Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information].</i>



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59 Murdock Road, Bedford

Scale 1:1,250 @ A4



Drawn By: LJW
Date: 06 July 2018

Property Services
Bedford Borough Council

