BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL **DECISION NO. 1897_____**

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 proposed letting of the part ground floor, Borough Hall to UDX Development Company Ltd, on the terms outlined in Confidential Appendix B to the report prepared to accompany this decision, be approved.

(2) That the Head of Regeneration, Property & Local Economy be authorised to finalise the terms of the lease subject to appropriate legal advice.

2. Date of decision

2 November 2026

3. Reasons for decision

The proposed letting will make more effective use of underutilised accommodation at Borough Hall and generate additional income for the Council. The proposed rent is the market rental value for the space.

The proposed occupier already leases accommodation within Borough Hall, making it a practical choice for the additional space. The occupier has indicated that it wishes to move into the accommodation as soon as possible, and only limited fit-out works are anticipated.

The proposed letting also supports the continuation and further development of partnership working and collaboration between the Council and UDX Development Company Ltd, as a result of teams being based in the same building.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

The alternative of not progressing this lease was considered and rejected, as the Council would forgo a reasonable annual income.

The alternative of seeking an alternative occupier was rejected as the proposed occupier already leases space within Borough Hall and the proposed letting can align with the existing occupation arrangements. In addition, the proposed letting would continue to support partnership working and collaboration between the Council and UDX Development Company Ltd, with resulting wider benefits to the local economy.

5. How decision is to be funded

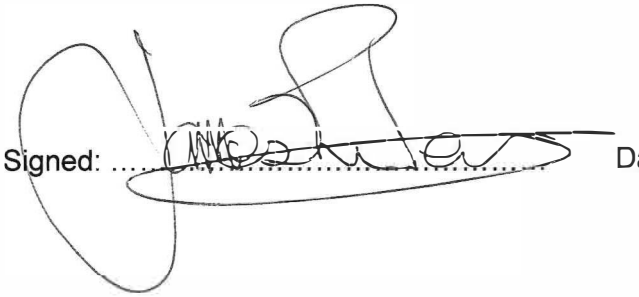
The proposed letting will generate additional income for the Council, by letting space within Borough Hall which is surplus to requirements at this time.

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

2 November 2026



Signed: ..... Date: **2 November 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: 2 November 2026.....

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: 11 November 2026.....

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

For publication

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

Date of Report: 2 November 2026

Report by: Interim Service Director for Property Services, Leisure & Culture

Subject: LETTING OF PART GROUND FLOOR, BOROUGH HALL TO UDX DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report seeks approval for the letting of part of the Ground Floor of Borough Hall (comprising approximately 225m² as outlined in red on the plan at **Confidential Appendix A**), to UDX Development Company Ltd. The proposed letting will make more effective use of underutilised accommodation within Borough Hall and generate additional income for the Council. The proposed commercial terms are set out in **Confidential Appendix B**.

1.2 The proposed letting requires the relocation of identified Council services elsewhere within Borough Hall. Headcount monitoring demonstrates that sufficient desk capacity is available to accommodate the relocation, and the Council's Corporate Leadership team have approved the proposed arrangements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

(1) Approve the proposed letting of the part ground floor, Borough Hall to UDX Development Company Ltd, on the terms outlined in Confidential Appendix B.

(2) Authorise the Head of Regeneration, Property & Local Economy to finalise the terms of the lease, subject to appropriate legal advice.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The proposal will make more effective use of underutilised accommodation at Borough Hall and generate additional income for the Council. The proposed rent is the market rental value for the space.

3.2 The proposed occupier already leases accommodation within Borough Hall, making it a practical choice for the additional space. The occupier has indicated that it wishes to move into the accommodation as soon as possible, and only limited fit-out works are anticipated.

3.3 The proposed letting also supports the continuation and further development of partnership working and collaboration between the Council and UDX Development Company Ltd as a result of teams being based in the same building.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 Headcount monitoring was undertaken within Borough Hall between January and August 2026 to assess capacity within the building's existing office accommodation. The results of this monitoring demonstrate that there is potential to make more efficient use of the building's existing accommodation, subject to ensuring that sufficient space remains available to meet the operational requirements of Council services, and to secure additional rental income.

4.2 The proposed letting will, therefore, not negatively impact on onsite working arrangements for Council officers.

5. DETAILS

5.1 The proposal is to grant a new lease of approximately 225m² on the Ground Floor of Borough Hall to UDX Development Company Ltd, in addition to their existing leases on the Ground Floor (Executive Decision 1886) and Sixth Floor (Executive Decision 1827). The area to be occupied is outlined in red on the plan at **Confidential Appendix A.**

5.2 The proposed letting will be on terms consistent with the existing leases for UDX Development Company Ltd, including rental charges and service charge payments, and these are set out at **Confidential Appendix B.**

5.3 The proposed letting is subject to limited fit-out work requirements and, therefore, subject to completion of the necessary legal and practical arrangements, there is an opportunity for the Council to start securing the additional rent income within a short timeframe.

5.4 This proposal represents an opportunity to secure additional income from accommodation that is not currently being used to its full capacity. The existing relationship with the proposed occupier and the ability to incorporate the additional accommodation into its existing occupation support the proposed approach.

6. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6.1 Do nothing. Not progressing this letting would mean that the Council would forgo additional rental income. It is also noted that retaining the space for Council use would not make most effective use of office capacity within Borough Hall.

6.2 Seek an alternative occupier. This option has not been recommended as the proposed occupier already leases space within Borough Hall and the proposed letting can align with the existing occupation arrangements. In addition, the proposed letting would continue to support partnership working and collaboration between the Council and UDX Development Company Ltd, with resulting wider benefits to the local economy.

7. KEY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Legal Issues – relevant legal power

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 satisfy best consideration. The standard form of lease adopted for Borough Hall lettings will be used for this letting and the Council's Legal department will be preparing the relevant legal documentation.

7.2 Policy Issues

Stimulating economic growth, financial stability and optimising assets are key priorities established within the Council's Corporate Plan and its Corporate Asset Strategy. The recommendation is consistent with the Stimulating Economic Growth priority and "optimising Council assets" way of working established in the Corporate Plan 2024/25-2027/28, and the following priority set out in the Corporate Asset Strategy 2024/2025-2027/2028:

- Efficient Operations: Manage and maintain our property assets in an effective, efficient and cost-conscious manner whilst optimising financial return and commercial opportunity and responding to our evolving needs.

7.3 Resource Issues

The proposed letting will generate additional income for the Council, by letting space within Borough Hall which is surplus to Council operational requirements at this time. The agreed rent is a market rent. The proposed letting will also place the liability for business rates and service charges onto the tenant, which will avoid these costs falling on the Council. The proposed commercial terms are set out at **Confidential Appendix B**.

7.4 Risks

Due diligence checks have been completed to minimise the risks associated with a new tenancy. The risk of there not being enough space for operational use in Borough Hall has been assessed and the proposed letting of space to UDX does not impact on achieving this priority.

7.5 Environmental Implications

The letting will comply with relevant environmental legislation in particular in particular Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). Borough Hall has a valid Energy Performance Certificate with a D rating.

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

The are no immediate impacts on families arising out of the recommendations of this report.

7.8 Community Safety and Resilience

There are no immediate impacts on community safety and resilience arising out of the recommendations of this report.

7.9 Impact on Health and Wellbeing

There are no immediate 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:

Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & External Relations
Corporate Leadership Team
Finance
Legal
Manager for Estates
Manager for Strategic Sites & Inward Investment

8.2 No adverse comments have been received.

9. WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS

9.1 Not applicable.

10. CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

Report Contact Officer:	Dan Moone, Business Partner Capital & Asset Planning dan.moone@bedford.gov.uk
Declarations of Interest by the Report Author:	None
File Reference:	None
Previous Relevant Minutes:	Executive Decision 1886: 4 August 2026 Executive Decision 1827: 27 October 2025

Background Papers:	None
Appendices:	Confidential Appendix A: Lease Plan Confidential Appendix B: Terms of Letting *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).*