

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL
Special Full Council
Thursday 18 February 2025
Decision Report

Hire of Council Chamber

Recommendation

Council considers the request for use of council chamber for public meetings.

Ward

Not Ward Specific

Financial Risk Management

There will be financial impacts should the council agree to this e.g. landlord permission, fob access, security doors, staffing implications.

Crime Prevention

Security measures would need to be implemented to protect the working office regarding health and safety and potential data breaches.

Objective

To promote good governance, transparency, and ensure an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.

Report

A request has been received regarding the hire of the Council chamber for a public meeting – at present there is no policy relating to this.

The lease for the Town Council Offices within Arms Everytne House was signed in March 2013 and it prohibits the underletting of the property. For the purposes of the lease, underlet can also be defined as assign, charge, or share possession.

To consider letting the property would require consent from the Landlord and the Superior Landlord. An amendment to the lease would incur additional charges.

The Council Chamber is immediately connected to the working office.

Should consent be agreed by the landlord and superior landlord, the Council would need to consider the following:

- Security of the premises; a minimum of two additional security doors – for health & safety and to protect personal data held in the office.
- Relocating the CCTV system, which is for sole use of the police.
- Fees, charges, and any concessions
- Competing with local community centres and other venues
- Political restrictions of use
- Hours of use – and implications on staffing resource.

The Council Chamber use is currently restricted to Council business only.

Council business, can be any of the following:

- Meetings of Council, Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups.
- Meeting of Officers
- Meeting with the attendance of Councillors and/or Officers with external bodies/partnerships/community groups/residents.
- Officer/Councillor Training.

Elaine Brown
Deputy Town Clerk
11 February 2025