

LEASE OF 9 SCHOOL LANE, MID CALDER

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services seeking approval for a three year lease of 9 School Lane, Mid Calder to Abby J's Cakes.

The report recalled that Council Executive approved 9 School Lane, Mid Calder as surplus to requirement on 6 March 2018. The property was marketed and a closing date set with the highest offer accepted for a hairdressing business. However this transaction did not conclude so the property was remarketed and following interest from a number of enquirers a closing date in January 2019 was set with four offers received.

The offer proposed to be accepted was from Abby J's Cakes, who intended to use the property as a café and cheesecake shop. They have also advised that they were committed to enabling community access and events by utilising the hall and group space in a multi-functional manner. The changing rooms would continue to be made available for use by Mid Calder Colts. The proposed use would also require minimal works to be undertaken to the property.

It was noted that the highest offer received in terms of rental was from an established company. However their proposal would require significant internal alterations and would not secure additional community use. And due to the historic nature of the property if circumstances resulted in business failure the council could be exposed to substantial reinstatement work costs.

It was therefore recommended that Council Executive :-

1. Approves a new three year lease of 9 School Lane, Mid Calder to Abby J's Cakes (Chris and Gillian Liddle) at an initial rent of £8,400 per annum; and
2. Authorises the Head of Finance and Property Services to agree to any changes required to the current terms in order to conclude the transaction on the basis that any revised terms and conditions still represented best value for the council.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report