



## AGENDA ITEM: 14

### SUMMARY

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>10 February 2015</b>
<b>Part:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Naming the Public Service Quarter</b>
Contact:	Cllr Andrew Williams, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration Cllr Nicholas Tiley, Portfolio Holder Finance and Resources  Author/Responsible Officer: Mark Gaynor
Purpose of report:	The report sets out proposals for the name of the Public Service Quarter
Recommendations	That Cabinet recommend to Council that the Public Service Quarter be officially named 'The Forum'.
Corporate Objectives:	<b>Regeneration.</b>  The Public Service Quarter is a key part of the Gade Zone Regeneration project which is aimed primarily to deliver significant regeneration in the town centre. It facilitates the creation of a new community focused building housing public and voluntary sector partners, a new commercial leisure facility developing more family friendly and evening attractions into the town centre and much needed new homes. Subsequent development of the Civic Centre and college sites will bring further new investment into the town centre, most likely for new housing.
Implications:	<b>Financial</b>  None directly
'Value For Money Implications'	<b>Value for Money</b>  No costs have been involved in the proposed naming of the Public Service Quarter. The new building will be considerably more efficient and its running costs will be substantially less

	that the Civic Centre.
Risk Implications	None identified
Community Impact Assessment	The Public Service Quarter brings together a range of services for the community into a single, modern and accessible building.
Health And Safety Implications	There are no Health and Safety implications arising from the report
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b></p> <p>This report appears in the agenda although it does not appear in the Cabinet Forward Plan. The report is asking for a decision which is not a 'key decision' as defined in the rules relating to the publication of items in the Forward Plan.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer</b></p> <p>No further comments to add.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Monitoring Officer S 151 Officer James Doe, Assistant Director Planning and Regeneration James Deane, Assistant Director Finance and Resources Nick Brown, Group Manager Commercial assets and Property Development Mark Brookes, Group Manager, Legal Governance</p>
Background papers:	Part I and II Cabinet Reports 26 June 2014, 17 September 2013, 24 July 2012, 24 April 2012, 22 January 2012.
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

## 1 Background

- 1.1 For project planning purposes the 'Public Service Quarter' has been the overarching term for the building, and has been referred to in this way in all matters to date including Cabinet and Council reporting, the procurement process, in communications and, most recently, in the planning application which is due for decision at Development Control Committee on 5 February.
- 1.2 The term Public Service Quarter is somewhat utilitarian and 'business-like' and lacks a more community based feel and it was always intended that it would have a more charismatic name as the project progresses. This report proposes that it be named 'The Forum' following consideration by Cabinet and Council.
- 1.3 The naming of any public building will always produce an extremely wide range of opinions as to what it should be, and whatever is chosen will have both its supporters and detractors. It will, however, almost certainly be accepted that 'The Public Service Quarter' has a bureaucratic feel and that an alternative name is preferable.
- 1.4 A variety of options were considered to help decide the possible name. These included the possibility of opening up the naming to the whole community or to a school competition. Experience elsewhere has shown, however, that this route can produce some unintended results which – if the outcome is a name which could not reasonably be used – could produce a negative outcome if the result had to be rejected. With the rise of online communications it has proved very easy for such exercises to be 'hijacked' – the Blue Peter cat naming is a case in point. Some exercises have also shown to have not produced anything dramatic – a new leisure centre in Selby ended up being popularly named the 'Selby Leisure Centre'.
- 1.5 Following informal consideration by Cabinet and officers involved in the project the preferred name for the Public service Quarter is 'The Forum'. 'The Forum', with its Roman origins, has clear connections to local history (there being significant Roman heritage in Dacorum) as well as indicating a public meeting and debating space normally at the centre of larger settlements. There is also a certain assonance in it being the Forum in Dacorum.
- 1.6 It is fully understood that it is not a unique or uncommon name for public or major buildings, there being a major facility in Norwich, the student union in Hatfield and a number of other examples. It does, however, have a strong gravitas and community emphasis and a welcoming and inclusive feel.
- 1.7 Consequently it is proposed that Cabinet recommend to Council a potential name for the Public Service Quarter and the preferred suggestion to date is 'The Forum'. It is proposed that Cabinet recommend to Council that the Public Service Quarter be officially referred to as 'The Forum'