



REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

BUILDING AND OFFICE RATIONALISATION UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on progress with the Building and Office Rationalisation Programme.
2. To set out the latest estimated costs (LEC) for the proposed new service premises at Worksop, which is the next project in the programme, and to seek approval to vary the capital programme for the funding required for this project.
3. This is a Key Decision as it results in expenditure of more than £1m.

Overview

4. At its meeting on 13th July 2023 Full Council considered a report on the Building and Office Rationalisation Programme; this report seeks to update on progress. At the meeting it was agreed that County Hall was unsuitable as a future core office base for the Council due to the cost, occupancy levels and environmental impact. In the light of this it was agreed to relocate the Council's civic, democratic and leadership functions to a new office site near Hucknall. Approval was also given to progress the development of formal options and the development of a more detailed business case for the future use of the County Hall site. The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management approved commencement of engagement to inform an Outline Business Case for the future of County Hall by decision dated 6th March 2024 and this work is now underway, involving engagement with key stakeholders and residents. The report also updated on the position and strategy for the Council's other main office bases and presented a Hub model concept. This report provides a further update on progress at these locations:

- Hub 1 – New office near Hucknall
- Hub 2 – New office/contact centre at Worksop
- Hub 3 – Repurposed accommodation at Retford post-16 Centre
- Hub 5 – Mansfield Hub

County Hall and New Office Near Hucknall

5. The infrastructure and construction works are underway and progressing well on site at Top Wighay near Hucknall, with sod cutting having taken place in December 2023. Further updates to the relevant Cabinet Members will be provided as construction progresses. Wider updates for members and staff through the intranet and in person meetings are also now underway. The building works are due for completion on schedule in early 2025.
6. The building is designed to achieve the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent standard, supporting the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency. The BREEAM Excellent rating will classify the building as being in the top 10% of new non-domestic buildings in the UK.
7. As engagement on the future of County Hall has now commenced work is underway to plan the relocation of staff and services currently based at County Hall to other suitable locations across the office estate. This ties in closely with the refresh of the Hybrid Working Strategy, to ensure that staff can work effectively to meet service delivery requirements. It is intended that County Hall will close to general staff use in Spring 2025. This will give a transition period with the new office near Hucknall due to be available in early 2025.
8. The Council will make more use of Trent Bridge House and a brief for improvement works has been prepared to deliver necessary changes to the building to support its wider use and access. The scope of these works includes changes to the reception area to improve accessibility, flexible space in the old canteen and the creation of some larger meetings rooms. These changes will be subject to necessary approval process and aimed to be complete for Spring 2025.

Mansfield Hub and Retford Post 16 Centre

9. Collaboration with Mansfield District Council to develop a shared new office (Mansfield Connect) facility at the former Beale's site in Mansfield town centre is advancing well with the District Council expecting an updated cost estimate later this spring. This information will inform the development of a business case for the Council's potential occupation of part of the new offices that will support a decision based on best value principles to relocate services into the new office thus releasing other office accommodation in the Mansfield area. This work is advancing well, and further proposals will be brought forward for the relevant Cabinet Member in due course – likely in Autumn 2024.
10. In the meantime, by decision dated 15th January 2024 the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management approved short term works at Meadow House which are underway and are scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2024. Works include redecoration, replacement flooring and refreshed furniture/equipment. This will support the front-line teams based at the site until the new proposed Mansfield Connect building is completed (scheduled for early in 2027). It is intended that the Council will take replacement space in this development that may release Meadow House for disposal. The current works will therefore ensure staff have a safe working environment in the short term and that the building commands best value if it is disposed of in the future.
11. The relocation of staff from the Chancery Lane office to the Retford Education Centre (Post 16) has been delayed, as the site is currently being used on a short term basis for Thrumpton Primary School, whilst its main school site is repaired after being flooded last

autumn. It is planned that the relocation will now take place in September/October 2024. It is intended to surrender the lease of Chancery Lane to the landlord, Bassetlaw District Council, thereafter.

Workshop Proposal

12. Current social care provision for Children's and Families Services in Worksop, one of the largest urban concentrations in the north of the County, is limited to three small bungalows adjacent to the former, now demolished, Bassetlaw Learning Centre in Worksop, which provide essential family contact services and space. Service user postcode analysis has demonstrated the need for a base and conferencing facilities in Worksop, while retaining similar local provision in Retford.
13. The proposed new building will enable the delivery of integrated safeguarding and educational services to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children, young people, and families in the area. It will also support the Council's move to a more environmentally sustainable estate as noted in the Council Plan. The delivery of a new building at this location for this purpose has been included within the approved Investing in Notts/Building and Office Rationalisation Programme. The new site will provide an improved environment for Children and Families and in doing so will aid recruitment and retention.
14. This project will deliver a new building, providing a dedicated space for the contact service alongside family conferencing facilities and touchdown space for other services in the locality. The space for the contact service will provide functional and domestic style settings to allow for family time and assessments to take place. The requirements have been informed by meetings and interviews with colleagues from the services and current service provision.
15. The project scope includes:
 - 3 large contact rooms; internal and external access, to secure, shared outdoor space; internal access to a kitchen area
 - 4 medium contact spaces up to 7 people.
 - 2 small contact spaces with appropriate flooring for baby baths.
 - 1 bathroom for assessments including bath/shower and baby changing facilities.
 - Additional entrance space separate to that of the main entrance to allow for safe transfer of children to families/foster carers.
 - Secure outdoor space for children to play, all weather space, secure with high fencing, storage for toys.
 - An office/touchdown area to accommodate 6 – 10 desks.
 - Dedicated conference facility to accommodate up to 15 people with hybrid technology.
 - Bookable small and medium meeting rooms to accommodate up to 8 people.
 - Reception area with waiting space for up to 8 people
 - Kitchen and breakout area for staff
 - Staff WC facilities
16. The scope of the project also includes the construction of an access road to the Council's adjacent retained land being the remainder of the site of the former learning centre and the site of the current buildings. This will enable this land to be promoted for development and

by providing the access will de-risk the site for development and help maximise value. This additional investment will be recouped at the point of development and will remove the need for additional works to access the Council's new building being required at a later stage.

17. The demolition of the bungalow buildings currently being used to deliver services from is also included in the project. This will be done once the main building has been completed and resident services have moved across, but prior to the site infrastructure and welfare facilities being removed, allowing for costs to be saved compared to this being done at a later date. The site has a high risk of vandalism, so leaving the vacant bungalows in situ whilst the new centre is in operation would result in additional risk and cost.
18. Planning consent for the scheme is already in place and it is anticipated that the building will be commenced in Summer 2024 with completion due in late Summer 2025.
19. To demonstrate value for money Arc have completed a VfM/Benchmark assessment to ensure that the works packages are competitively priced by the contractor.

Workshop Latest Estimated Costs

20. The latest estimated cost of the building and infrastructure works are set out below. The fees shown are for all professions involved in the project at all stages of RIBA 0-7 and associated professional services.
21. Fees also include all feasibility costs including site surveys and associated statutory fees, as well as Arc Partnership fees.
22. Furniture and equipment requirements will be met by reusing equipment from other locations, again aligning with cost saving and carbon reduction objectives.

Latest Estimated Cost – Workshop New Build

<u>Outturn Prices)</u>	
	£
Building Works	4,431,150
Professional fees	405,450
Total	4,836,600

Anticipated cash flow

	To Date	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£	£	£	£
Building Works	79,580	320,420	4,031,150	4,431,150

Professional Fees	223,504	80,000	101,946	405,450
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Totals	303,084	400,420	4,133,096	4,836,600
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Other Options Considered

23. Not delivering the Building and Office Rationalisation Programme would mean that the Council did not reap the benefits previously agreed in terms of efficiency, environmental improvement, financial savings and support to smarter working.

24. Other Council owned buildings in the Worksop locality were considered as to whether they could house the services, with a review taking place in early 2024. This review considered the Council's estate of service buildings in the town to see if they had both the spare capacity and design to provide suitable spaces and this failed to identify any viable alternatives. The do-nothing option has been discounted as the current accommodation is not up to an acceptable standard for service delivery.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

25. To provide an update on progress with the programme and to enable the Worksop new build scheme to progress to enable Council services to be delivered in new, purpose built accommodation in accordance with the Council's strategy for its office and service delivery estate.

Statutory and Policy Implications

26. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

27. £2,820,000 funding for the works will be met from the Building and Office Rationalisation Programme, £74,000 from the site clearance programme with additional funding sought from the Capital programme of £1,942,600.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) To note the progress being made with the Building and Office Rationalisation Programme.

- 2) To approve the Latest Estimated Costs for the new premises at Worksop and for the project to proceed to the construction phase based.
- 3) To approve a variation to the capital programme of £1,942,600.

Councillor Keith Girling
Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Phil Berrill, Team Manager, Property Commissioning, T: 0115 9774641, E: phil.berrill@nottsgov.uk

Constitutional Comments (HD 8/3/2024)

28. Cabinet is the appropriate decision maker in respect of this matter as it involves a variation to the Capital Programme in excess of £1million.

Financial Comments (GB 20/02/2024)

29. It is proposed that £4,836,600 works set out in this report will be funded from the Building and Office Rationalisation capital programme (£2,820,000) and the Site Clearance programme (£74,000) both of which are already approved within the Economic Development and Asset Management portfolio capital programme. A capital bid seeking an additional £1,942,600 of funding from capital contingency has been supported by the Corporate Asset Management Group. It is proposed that, subject to the approval of this report, the Economic Development and Asset Management portfolio capital programme is varied by £1,942,600 to enable this project to be completed.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Report to Full Council 13 July 2023: [BUILDING AND OFFICE RATIONALISATION PROGRAMME – UPDATE, FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNTY HALL, AND PROPOSALS FOR NEW OFFICES NEAR HUCKNALL](#)

Report to Policy Committee 12 February 2020: [Investing in Nottinghamshire: Making the Best Use of Council Premises](#)

[Report to Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management titled 'Future of County Hall – Public and stakeholder engagement' approved on 6th March 2024.](#)

Report to Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management titled [‘Meadow House, Mansfield refurbishment – latest estimated costs’](#) approved on 15th January 2024.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.