

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BUILDING AND OFFICE RATIONALISATION PROGRAMME – UPDATE, FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNTY HALL, AND PROPOSALS FOR NEW OFFICES NEAR HUCKNALL

Purpose of the Report

1. Within the context of the ongoing work of the Council's Building and Office Rationalisation Programme, this report considers the suitability of County Hall as a future core office base for the Council and recommends the relocation of the Council's civic, democratic and leadership functions to the new office site near Hucknall, on the basis that the new office can accommodate them when it is completed in the winter of 2024/25.
2. The report seeks approval for the Latest Estimated Costs for the new office building, and for work to develop a formal options analysis and resultant business case for the future use of the County Hall site for further consideration by Members. This work is to include engagement and consultation with key stakeholders and residents and incorporate consideration of the heritage factors associated with the site.
3. Finally, the report seeks approval for further engagement work with employees regarding their future working arrangements in the context of the further development of the Council's hybrid and flexible working and office rationalisation approaches. This will include particular engagement with employees who currently work from the West Bridgford campus.

Information

The Strategic Case for Change

4. The Council has a mature approach to flexible and hybrid working arrangements. The Investing in Nottinghamshire programme was approved in 2019, and the Council's adoption of its objectives and principles has led to a range of workplace/working style changes for Council employees and Members that have driven improvements in productivity and efficiency, service delivery, links to communities, carbon emissions and employee welfare (work/life balance). These include:
 - *Updates to physical working environments in most major office buildings to support flexible working;*

- *Space utilisation programmes to inform appropriate desk ratios for different services to enable the most effective use of space available;*
 - *Different furniture and alternate office seating arrangements to create spaces for a variety of work settings across the Council's estate;*
 - *The rollout of mobile devices for most employees and members to support flexible working principles; and*
 - *The introduction of flexible and hybrid working policies to support effective and safe flexible working.*
5. Most office-based Council employees work in a hybrid way. The most recent study in November 2022 showed office building occupancy averaging less than 40% across the Council's estate, including the West Bridgford Campus. Flexible working is now a permanent feature in the working styles of much of the Council's workforce, and as such will significantly impact upon the Council's office and premises requirement, as well as its approach to related matters such as workforce development and information technology.
6. In May 2021, the Council declared a climate emergency, and its commitment to achieving carbon neutrality in all its activities by 2030. The Council's property portfolio is an area where carbon reduction is a major consideration. The office rationalisation programme will significantly contribute to the Council's plans to reduce carbon emissions through the development of more energy efficient offices, with flexible working also generating reduced carbon emissions from staff travel and commuting.
7. The Investing in Nottinghamshire Programme was driven by a set of overarching principles which were established by Policy Committee in February 2020 and further endorsed in December 2020 and November 2021. These principles continue to drive the Building & Office Rationalisation Programme. They are: -
- *Maximising the strategic impact of the location of the Council's office estate and the use of the Council's assets for economic impact and regeneration.*
 - *Improving the mobility, productivity and effectiveness of our workforce and services through, new technology and service integration.*
 - *Developing fit for purpose accommodation that supports modern service models, including integrated working.*
 - *Ensuring the Council has appropriate buildings in its main communities.*
 - *Making maximum use of the Council's current assets whilst releasing surplus accommodation.*
 - *Prioritising office accommodation owned by the County Council rather than that leased from the market.*
 - *Delivering effective and efficient facilities management services to ensure safe and sustainable offices for staff and the public.*
 - *Reducing environmental impact through work to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council's estate and delivering improved work transport/access solutions for staff.*
8. The adoption of flexible working across the Council has been accelerated by the recent Covid pandemic. This has resulted in further reductions in desk

ratios in offices and a greater appetite for flexible working amongst employees. This is a key driver in enabling the Council to recast its approach to the occupation of its office and operational estate.

Progress Updates and Proposals

9. Considering the achievements to date, the growth of flexible working – which is now a major factor in most public and private sector workplaces - and the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, presents an opportunity for further consideration of how the Council's building and office portfolio may best be utilised.
10. Over the Autumn/Winter of 2022/2023 the Overview Committee undertook a review of the Council's operational office estate. This review consisted of site visits, discussions with employees and analysis of building information and occupancy data. In January 2023, the Committee made recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management. His response to these was accepted by the Overview Committee in March 2023.
11. The review identified that there were a series of office projects (Hubs) that the Council had already identified that should be considered as part of the Council's current and future core office estate. These sites were:
 - *Hub 1 – New office near Hucknall*
 - *Hub 2 – New office/contact centre at Worksop*
 - *Hub 3 – Repurposed accommodation at Retford post-16 Centre*
 - *Hub 4 – Beeston central office (opened in May 2022)*
 - *Hub 5 – Mansfield Hub*
12. The review considered the remaining main office estate:-
 - *County Hall, West Bridgford*
 - *Trent Bridge House, West Bridgford*
 - *Meadow House, Mansfield*
 - *Lawn View House, Sutton-in-Ashfield*
 - *Sir John Robinson House, Arnold*
 - *Welbeck House, Ollerton*
 - *Thoresby House, Ollerton*
13. This report focuses on the key programme activity undertaken since the Overview Committee review, with a particular focus on the new office near Hucknall and County Hall campus as set out in the Overview Committee recommendations.

County Hall and New Offices Near Hucknall

14. The Overview Committee review highlighted significant issues with the continuing occupation of the County Hall building. These included its long-term sustainability and impact upon the Council's ability to meet its net zero carbon targets, high annual operating and essential maintenance costs, and low occupancy levels. To illustrate this:

- *In 2022/23 the gross operating cost of the site was £1,718,000. It is a very large building and site, it is energy inefficient, and its infrastructure is ageing. As such, these costs will continue to rise. In 2022/23 costs included £240,000 for staffing, £230,000 for cleaning, £437,000 business rates, £274,000 electricity, £63,000 for gas and £118,000 on essential day to day repairs. In addition, £80,000 was spent on capital maintenance, and £73,000 on servicing and inspections*
 - *The site also has a significant backlog and ongoing maintenance works liability estimated at £30.6m in the period to 2035, as identified within detailed stock condition surveys undertaken by Arc Partnership for the Council, with around 50% of these works to be delivered before 2026. Issues identified through the survey include water supply and distribution pipework works - £1.4m; heating and ventilation works -£6.2m; electrical mains distribution, power and lighting work - £12.6m; communications and security installations - £2.3m; associated internal decoration works - £3m.*
 - *In addition, if the County Council was to remain in occupation of the site, the cost of improving the County Hall site offices and infrastructure to suitable modern office and environmental standards to support the achievement of the County Council's carbon net zero target by 2030 is estimated to be circa £28m by Arc. In the event of a major refurbishment programme being undertaken, there is potential overlap of the cost of some refurbishment works with those identified through the condition survey. This would be clarified at the full feasibility and design stage of a refurbishment programme.*
15. In this context, the review of the Council office estate and the new build office near Hucknall present the Council with the opportunity to consider whether it may transfer functions currently based at County Hall to other, more modern locations. Doing so would support the Council's consideration of the long-term future of the County Hall site, would aid delivery of the Council's net zero commitment and would reduce the Council's long-term property related risks and liabilities at the site.
 16. A key consideration in this is the provision of suitable accommodation for the Council's civic and democratic functions. Here, the opportunity presented by the new build office accommodation near Hucknall has been explored, in line with the recommendations made by the Overview Committee. This work has established that the new building can accommodate the civic and democratic functions of the Council and provide office space for elected Members within the existing footprint of the new building. This work has also established that the Council functions most closely associated with its civic and democratic purpose can also be accommodated, within the context of the Council's hybrid working framework. These include the corporate leadership and democratic and communications functions.
 17. Outline consideration has been given to other potential sites. However, it is the case that the Council's office estate does not contain another building that could accommodate the public meeting requirements associated with the democratic purpose of the Council.

18. The new building will also provide accommodation, as originally intended, for the Customer Service Centre (CSC) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), both of which are major front-line services currently operating from short term leased premises in Annesley Woodhouse at a cost of £200,000 per annum.
19. The changes outlined above have necessitated some reconfiguration of internal spaces, including the creation of multi-purpose spaces for civic and democratic functions, appropriate reception and public space, and capacity for employee and member accommodation. The new building will be ready for occupation in Winter 2024/25. Full planning permission was granted by the Council's Planning & Rights of Way Committee on 27 July 2022. The appendix attached to this report summarises the accommodation planned at the new office.
20. Car parking arrangements will be reviewed to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the short, medium, and long term. This will be considered alongside the development of a travel plan for the site to ensure that employees, members and visitors are able to access the site via sustainable travel where possible.
21. The revised scope for the new office has been costed. The revised construction costs are set out below. Additionally, work is underway to model the operating costs of the new building – it is the case that these will be significantly lower than the County Hall site given the smaller size and greater energy efficiency of the new building.
22. It is therefore proposed that approval is given for the revised accommodation arrangements set out above for the new office. These will see the Council's civic, democratic and leadership functions relocate to this site.

Latest Estimated Cost – new offices near Hucknall

23. The original brief for the new office was issued in May 2019. The building was envisaged as new, modern space for the Council which would act as a catalyst for wider economic development of the wider development site and the local area. The Covid pandemic slowed the implementation of the original brief but also provided a period for reflection which has allowed the Council's flexible working model to be considered in respect of the occupation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Customer Services Centre teams. There have also been changes to the design and layout in light of the review undertaken by Overview Committee, as well as some technical sustainable construction requirements and planning obligations.
24. Therefore, the costs set out in this report reflect significant revisions to the original brief. These are set out below, along with their cost impacts on the overall latest cost:
 - The building is designed to achieve the BREEAM Excellent standard, supporting the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency. The BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent rating will classify the building as being in the top 10% of new non-domestic buildings in the UK when judged against its categories of Management (of the design and construction), Health and Wellbeing (of

those using the building and site), Energy (low and efficient consumption in building use, onsite generation etc), Transport (provision of sustainable measures), Water (low and efficient consumption), Materials (responsible sourcing, efficient usage and robust detailing to maintain lifespan), Waste (generated in construction and operation), Land Use and Ecology (managing and enhancing existing ecology) and Pollution (reduction of air, surface water, light and noise pollution). The new office will therefore employ a range of strategies to reduce operational energy consumption, carbon emissions and running costs. These have influenced the building's overall design and layout and include: -

- A low carbon design solution, utilising high insulation levels, solar shading and use of high efficiency building services.
- An all-electric servicing strategy, meaning that as the national grid gradually decarbonises, the carbon emissions associated with the building will reduce. No fossil fuels will be burnt on site and photo-voltaic solar panels will contribute to reducing electricity demand.
- The promotion of sustainable modes of transport through secure cycle storage, showers, lockers, and EV charging points.
- Extensive biodiversity enhancements through the choice and range of onsite planting, e.g. wildflower, native hedgerows/trees etc
- Capturing surface water contaminants on site, preventing these polluting natural watercourses.
- Acoustics optimised to create a comfortable working environment.
- An overall design developed to allow future flexibility and disassembly, reducing future wastage.
- Surface water drainage to reduce surface water runoff pollution
- Enhanced monitoring of energy and water consumption.
- Responsible Procurement and Construction Management practices

Ongoing design work associated with achieving the BREEAM Excellent standard has resulted in a net additional cost of £0.52m.

- In response to the Overview Committee review, redesign solutions have been developed. These include flexible meeting spaces throughout and a cellular fit out to the third floor of the building - which was originally only costed to open plan and a shell finish (a net additional cost of £1.24m).
 - It is also the case that the long-term gestation of the office project from the original brief to the current design has been significantly impacted by inflationary factors that have affected the wider economy in the last 2 years, and which Members have considered previously, specifically in respect of construction and technical services (a net cost impact of £3.11m).
25. Set against this, value engineering and cost challenge by Arc Partnership has removed £1.18m in potential costs from the LEC sum.
26. In terms of fit out and equipment, it is intended to re-use furniture and equipment from current employee and member accommodation as far as possible.

Where new equipment is required, funding will be allocated from existing budgets as far as possible.

27. It should also be noted that a separate LEC report for the road and infrastructure elements of the overall Top Wighay development was approved by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management on 10 May 2023. This infrastructure will open up the overall residential element of the site and will provide direct access into the adjacent employment land. This infrastructure is required to be installed to enable the wider scheme and support the generation of significant capital receipts for the Council in the coming years from the development of the site by commercial partners. The infrastructure scheme has also been significantly developed since the project's inception. The scheme now delivers a spur junction, road and roundabout, additional bus stops on the main road and on the spur junction between the new traffic light junction and the proposed roundabout. LEC approval was granted for £4.38m of expenditure. Therefore, the LEC table set out below is for the delivery of the office building and associated works only.

Latest Estimated Cost

(Outturn Prices)

	£
Building Works – Office	16,199,210
Professional Services Costs	2,189,070
Total	18,388,280

Anticipated cash flow

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Total £
Building Works - Office	5,100,000	11,099,210	16,199,210
Professional Services Costs	1,909,070	280,000	2,189,070
Totals	7,009,070	11,379,210	18,388,280

28. It should be noted that professional service costs shown are the costs for all professions involved in the project, and include all feasibility, design and development costs including site surveys and associated statutory fees.

29. The new-build office is being competitively tendered by Arc Partnership through the SCAPE Framework and all packages of work have been market tested. Costs associated with the updated brief have been allowed within the Latest Estimated Cost. However, work continues to scrutinise and value engineer costs to drive further efficiencies and value. Independent benchmarking of the contractor costs continues.

Other sites

30. Meadow House, Mansfield is the only primary office not yet to have been refurbished to fully support flexible working. Engagement is currently underway with the teams at the site to determine their requirements. These will be considered by the Cabinet member, in the context of work with Mansfield District Council to consider the County Council's potential occupation of part of the large Mansfield Connect site in the town centre of Mansfield by 2026. The outcome of these discussions may include options that could impact on Lawn View House and Sherwood Energy Village – both sites with accommodation that is under-occupied by Council employees.
31. The refurbishment of a vacant part of the post-16 centre in Retford to provide an office base for local Council teams, and a children's services contact facility, has been agreed. The relocation of services to the Post-16 building will provide a fit for purpose, modern building for employees which will support retention and recruitment. The move will enable the Council to hand back Chancery Lane to Bassetlaw District Council providing a financial saving and enable the implementation of flexible/hybrid working whilst maintaining a local service. To enable this to happen a revised management and governance agreement for the site is being concluded.
32. The proposed new building in Worksop is planned to house children's services contact and conference services, ensuring these services can be provided in a fit for purpose facility. The new building will replace outdated buildings on the same site. As with the new office near Hucknall, this new building is designed to minimise environmental impact by being constructed to achieve high environmental standards. A separate Latest Estimated Cost report for this site will be considered by the Cabinet member for Economic Development and Asset Management.

Risks

33. The key risks associated with the work set out in this report are as follows: -
 - Construction cost and delay – delivering complex new buildings such as the office near Hucknall brings inherent risk of cost overrun and construction delay, caused by external factors. To mitigate this there is a robust programme management structure in place overseeing the delivery of the construction programme. Costs will be tracked closely, and variances reported back to both officer governance groups and the relevant Cabinet Members.
 - The continuing development and growth of flexible working approaches – the Council's hybrid working model will be subject to further review and continue to

evolve, in line with broader trends in employment practice. This will continue to impact upon the Council's required office estate, particularly in terms of the volume of accommodation that will be required. To mitigate, levels of occupation in office premises will continue to be monitored, with the resultant data informing future choices about the volume, scope and nature of accommodation required.

- Site interdependencies – In many cases, the optimum future arrangements for the occupation of individual office sites are dependent upon confirmation of the arrangement/requirements in other locations. This is particularly the case for the Mansfield/Ashfield localities and sites such as Meadow House, Lawn View House and the Mansfield Hub. To manage these interdependencies, the Buildings and Office Rationalisation Board will oversee the overall programme, to ensure timely and cost-effective choices, with appropriate reporting to relevant Cabinet members.

Engagement and Communication

34. Engagement with the employees in teams impacted by the work to reshape the Council's estate is underway and will continue. Where appropriate, for example with individual teams that will be impacted by the development of the new office near Hucknall, specific engagement will continue.
35. Trades union partners have joined the Buildings and Office Rationalisation Board, and updates/briefings on the programme have been considered at the Joint Central Negotiating Panel (JCNP) and at groups such as the Disabled Workers Group. This will continue.
36. More broadly, Council-wide communications will continue to ensure that the wider Council workforce are kept informed about the programme.
37. In respect of Members accommodation, further information on the detailed accommodation being developed will be shared with members through briefings that will be scheduled in the coming weeks.
38. From a public perspective, a communication plan will ensure that the public and local stakeholders are kept informed of, and engaged in, work to progress the Council's consideration of key sites such as County Hall.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

39. The continued rationalisation of the Council's office estate offers further potential for revenue cost saving, capital income, carbon reduction and the Council's delivery of its economic development priorities. As such, this programme supports the long-term delivery of the Council's strategic objectives as set out in the Council Plan – Healthy, Prosperous and Green. The programme also supports the delivery of specific objectives set out in the Council's current Annual Delivery Plan.

40. The work set out in this report will also help ensure that the Council's workforce and Members are able to work from high quality, modern and flexible accommodation that supports the delivery of the Council's hybrid working policies.
41. The work set out in this report will support the development of a suitable and sufficient office estate for the Council. It also ensures that key service delivery functions can continue to be based in locations across the County that work best for communities and service users, and which also act as locations for local employment.
42. The approach set out in this report highlights the continuing financial and operational benefits of service co-location at sites such as the Mansfield Hub, alongside other public sector partners.
43. The work set out in this report continues to deliver the long-term objectives and principles established by the Investing in Nottinghamshire Programme in 2019.
44. Relocating some functions to the new office near Hucknall will enable the Council to actively consider the future of the County Hall site to coincide with the completion and occupation of the new office. Relocation will further reduce levels of occupation at County Hall and will support additional work to determine the most appropriate accommodation arrangements for the functions and teams that would initially remain at County Hall. In this respect, work has been undertaken to confirm that these functions and teams can be accommodated within the Council's current office estate on a standard 4:10 desk/staff ratio, mainly at Trent Bridge House in West Bridgford, which is 300 metres from County Hall. Trent Bridge House does not have any capacity to replicate the equipment storage available at County Hall. Therefore, a programme of work to rationalise equipment and file storage, and further digitise records, will be required. In addition, consideration would need to be given to modernising the reception and staff/public facilities at Trent Bridge House.
45. In considering the future of the County Hall site, the Council will be able to develop a full business case, for consideration by Members, of the future options for the site. This will provide the Council with the potential opportunity to generate significant capital and revenue income in the future, whilst reducing/removing its current significant site risks and cost liabilities and protecting the site's key heritage features. In this respect, it is worth noting that Derbyshire County Council is currently conducting a similar exercise for its County Hall premises in Matlock, and that a number of other councils, including councils in Nottinghamshire, have in recent years exited long term main offices in favour of more modern and cost-effective accommodation.
46. The work to develop the business case will be informed by the following core principles: -

- That the County Hall building is a significant local landmark of heritage value in a location offering significant public amenity.
 - That in considering options for the future of the site, the Council will seek to develop a vision for its future that respects these characteristics, and ideally enhances them, whilst ensuring that the Council's financial and risk imperatives are met.
 - That in its consideration of options, the Council will engage and involve local stakeholders, including residents and heritage organisations.
47. Relocating functions and teams away from County Hall into more modern office accommodation will support the Council's net zero commitments. The office building near Hucknall will be a BREEAM Excellent building, which will operate in a way that minimises carbon use and emissions, and result in significant reductions in energy related costs, compared with County Hall. As a new building, it will have minimal maintenance costs.

Other Options Considered

48. Consideration has been given to alternative options:

- Not proceeding with the new office development near Hucknall: This option has been discounted as the new office is expected to provide fit for purpose accommodation for the Customer Services Centre and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, both of which are business critical functions for the Council, and which currently occupy premises on a short term leased basis. The new development offers the opportunity for both teams to relocate to a nearby Council owned property that will be fit for purpose and secure in terms of tenure.
- Not relocating the Council's civic and democratic functions to the new office: This option has been considered and discounted. The new office offers the only viable alternative accommodation for the Council's civic and democratic functions. The new office development offers the Council a timely and unique opportunity to develop new, purpose-designed space for these fundamental functions at a site it owns. In turn, this frees up the opportunity for the future of County Hall – which is underoccupied, expensive to operate and maintain, and a major barrier to the Council's net zero commitments – to be considered, which in turn presents an opportunity for the Council to develop a business case for the utilisation of a major building and land asset.
- Not proceeding with the wider office rationalisation programme: This option has been discounted on the basis that the programme has delivered employee accommodation improvements over a number of years, along with operational efficiencies, environmental benefits and revenue savings. The programme is one that will continue to evolve to accommodate changing working practices around hybrid working, and the Council's evolving space requirements, and as such will be able to flex according to changing circumstance.

Statutory and Policy Implications

49. 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

50. Paragraph 14 sets out the long-term financial sustainability impact of continuing to occupy County Hall, the on-going cost of operating the site and the significant backlog of maintenance costs associated with occupation. Paragraphs 22 to 28 reflect that significant revisions to the original design of the new office building result in a revised latest estimated cost for the overall project of £18.4m. It should be noted that this is in addition to the £4.4m road and infrastructure costs that were approved by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management on 10 May 2023 to unlock the wider development of the site.
51. Following a full review of the Building and Office Rationalisation Programme and because of the latest estimate cost of the new build office, there is an additional funding requirement of £6.9m to complete the programme. Paragraph 32 also sets out the continuing risks associated with the report. Close monitoring will ensure that any potential additional costs are identified early in the project. It is proposed that the additional costs are funded from excess capital receipts forecast by the Council.

Equality Considerations

52. An EQIA has been completed to address issues of equality associated with the Buildings and Office rationalisation programme. The new and reshaped office accommodation described in this report will meet modern standards in terms of public and employee access and accessibility. As such, new accommodation significantly improves accessibility for the Council's overall office estate. To illustrate this, the new office near Hucknall will include a Changing Places facility for staff and the public; this offers the highest quality accredited toilet and changing facilities for those with disabilities and will be the first such provision within the Council's main office estate.

Environmental Considerations

53. The recommendations within this report will support the Council's net zero commitments by ultimately reducing the Council's office estate and delivering new accommodation that meets high environmental standards. The Council's continuing commitment to a core office estate based in communities around

Nottinghamshire, along with the continuing implementation of the Council's hybrid working strategy, will support reductions in the environmental impact of employee travel and commuting.

Implications for Service Users

54. The recommendations within this report will continue to ensure that the Council's office estate remains located in major communities across the County, supporting continuing public access to services. In addition, the new accommodation for the Customer Service Centre and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub will provide secure, purpose-built accommodation for critical front line services.

Human Resource Implications

55. The implications on the workforce are set out within this report and focus on three key elements; further development of the Council's hybrid and flexible working policies and approaches, engagement with employees currently delivering services that are proposed to move to the new building near Hucknall, and engagement with employees who currently work from the West Bridgford campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council

- 1) Following the acceptance of Overview Committee's recommendations and subsequent more detailed work, agrees that County Hall is unsuitable as a future core office base for the Council, due to the cost, occupancy levels and environmental impact factors set out in the report.
- 2) In light of recommendation 1, approves the relocation of the Council's civic, democratic and leadership functions to the new office site near Hucknall, on the basis that the new office can accommodate them when it is completed in the winter of 2024/25, with further engagement and briefing activity for all members to take place during the period of construction.
- 3) Approves the Latest Estimated Costs for the new office building and, subject to a capital bid to the Corporate Asset Management Group, approves the associated variation to the capital programme
- 4) Approves the development of a formal options analysis and more detailed business case for the future use of the County Hall site for consideration by Members. This work is to include engagement with key stakeholders and residents and incorporate consideration of the heritage factors associated with the County Hall site, along with the general principles set out in this report.
- 5) Approves further engagement with employees regarding their future working arrangements in the context of the further development of the Council's hybrid working and office rationalisation approach. This will include particular

engagement with employees based at the West Bridgford campus in the light of recommendation 1.

**COUNCILLOR BEN BRADLEY MP
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments (CEH 03/07/2023)

56. Full Council is considering this report as it involves and considers key strategic and operational functions of the County Council which has an impact on and implications for the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, the Nottinghamshire Plan and the Council's commitment to making all Council activity net carbon neutral by 2030.

Financial Comments (GB 20/6/23)

57. The report sets out that the Latest Estimated Cost of the new Top Wighay Office totals £18.4m which is in addition to the £4.4m infrastructure costs that were approved by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment on 10 May 2023. The report also sets out that there are some risks to the delivery and costs of the project. Close monitoring will continue to ensure any potential additional costs are identified early and any further amendments to the capital programme will require further reports to the Cabinet Member for Finance.
58. The Building and Office Rationalisation programme already has a capital budget in the approved Economic Development and Asset Management portfolio capital programme of £17.9m from April 2023. The outcome of the Latest Estimated Costs set out in this report and a wider review of the programme results in an additional funding requirement of £6.9m to complete the programme. The Annual Budget Report 2023/24 that was reported to Full Council in February 2023 approved the Council's capital receipts policy. It was agreed that "capital receipts, to the value approved as part of the February 2021 budget report, are set against previous years' borrowing thereby reducing the impact of the Minimum Revenue Provision on the revenue accounts. This will enable excess capital receipts to be used to fund additional capital investment". The Annual Budget Report to Full Council in February did identify forecast capital receipts in excess of the budget approved in February 2021. It is therefore proposed that the EDAM portfolio capital programme is varied, subject to a capital bid to the Corporate Asset Management Group, to include the additional £6.9m required to complete the Building and Office Rationalisation programme, funded from excess capital receipts.

HR Comments (HG 3/07/23)

59. This report sets out proposals for our future office portfolio and the associated impact on our employees. We have been engaging with Trade Unions and our self-managed networks such as the disability network for months, to ensure that

proposals are built with full consideration of the impact on our employees and are designed with their input where possible.

60. Staff teams have been engaged in the proposed office design as part of this process and all affected teams have been spoken to. Frequent engagement is taking place with Trade Unions at our monthly Central Panel, where this is now a standing item. We have made a commitment to continue to engage widely with the workforce and with specific teams and individuals where relevant. In some instances, this may include formal consultation with staff.
61. The Council Building and Office Rationalisation Programme gives us the opportunity to continue to modernise our approach to work and our working environments. This includes our approach to hybrid and flexible working. We engaged with staff about hybrid working in 2022 and will build on that feedback through a series of engagement sessions with employees to develop the next iteration.

Appendix – New Council Offices Fact Sheet

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 EDAM Cabinet Member – Top Wighay Infrastructure – May 2023
- Overview Committee Report – Building and Office Rationalisation Programme – March 2023
- Overview Committee Report – Building and Office Rationalisation Programme - January 2023
- Planning Committee – Top Wighay Office Development – July 2022
- EDAM Committee Report – January 2022
- EDAM Committee report – November 2021
- Policy Committee Report – Smarter Working - Hybrid Working Strategy for the County Council - July 2021
- Policy Committee Report - Review of the Investing in Nottinghamshire Programme: utilising the Council's property estate to deliver environmental, economic and financial benefits in a post covid world - December 2020
- Policy Committee Report – Update on the Environmental Policy and Environment Strategy - March 2020
- Policy Committee Report - Investing in Nottinghamshire: Making the Best Use of Council Premises - February 2020
- Planning Committee Report - Construction of Two Highway Junctions to Allow Access to Development Site at Top Wighay Farm, Hucknall - February 2020
- Policy Committee Report - Investing in Nottinghamshire: Top Wighay Masterplan - November 2019
- Policy Committee Report - Investing in Nottinghamshire: Delivering the Top Wighay Farm Sustainable Urban Extension - June 2019
- Policy Committee Report - Investing in Nottinghamshire: Delivering the Council Plan through a second Phase of the Smarter Working Programme - March 2019

- Policy Committee Report – Investing in Nottinghamshire: Top Wighay Masterplan - January 2019
- Investing in Nottinghamshire Programme - Equality Impact Assessment
- County Hall Campus: Backlog Maintenance, Modernisation and Environmental Improvements - Cost Assumptions

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All