

Member Briefing

Number: 1089

Title: Accommodation review and flexible and mobile working - project update

Summary: The accommodation review final proposal has now been shared with staff and work is underway to finalise the detail to ensure that implementation of all team moves runs smoothly.

The final proposal aligns with our original aims of developing a more modernised way of working, moving services closer to the residents we serve and make a saving of £2.4 million by 2020.

This briefing provides a summary of the work that has been happening over the last six weeks.

Background

The accommodation review, which started over 12 months ago, is now nearing completion. After engaging and consulting with those staff affected by the review of our corporate buildings, and the move to flexible and mobile working, a final proposal was agreed. The proposal outlines the need to move staff out of HQ and into other Council buildings across the borough and for most teams to move to a 1:1.8 desk ratio. This includes teams in Chester, Ellesmere Port, Tarvin and Winsford.

New tenants have begun moving into HQ including The Race Company who took up residency on the 4th floor overlooking Chester racecourse, earlier this year. They are soon to be joined by Knights who are currently fitting out half of the 3rd floor ready for moving in later this month. Commercial estate agents, Legat Owen were appointed in June to market the property on behalf of the Council, and there has been several companies showing an interest to date.

Staff relocation numbers from HQ to other corporate buildings across the borough

- 130 staff moving to Nicholas House
- 35 staff moving to Goldsmith House
- 88 staff moving to Wyvern House
- 428 staff moving to Civic Way
- 40 staff moving to Tarvin Professional Centre

Current position and ongoing work

Committees and Members' area

- Committee meetings will continue to be held in HQ G1, G2 and G4 meeting rooms as an interim measure – a long-term solution is being considered
- Members lockers will remain in close proximity to committee rooms

- The Democratic Services team will relocate from HQ 2nd floor to HQ ground floor, adjacent to the meeting rooms
- Alternative Member Group rooms are being explored. These are likely to be in Nicholas House once the Democratic Services team relocate to HQ ground floor
- Members hot desks, per party, will be available in Civic Way and Wyvern House – we will share the exact locations once they have been agreed

Parking

One of the most frequently asked questions at People Panel and during the Accommodation/Flexible and Mobile Working review is around parking. Over the past few months we have been actively looking at parking solutions to support the workforce and Members in Chester, Winsford and Ellesmere Port.

Ellesmere Port - other car parks currently being considered are Wellington Road and Coronation Road

Winsford – 50 new spaces are being considered on the Verdin Centre car park as more partner organisations as well as staff move into Wyvern House

Chester – a number of car parking spaces have been released as part of tenancy agreements and this will continue as more companies sublet space in HQ. At the point where HQ is fully let (except the ground floor) there will be an allocation of 70 spaces on Castle Square available to CWaC staff and Members who are based in Chester offices. Whilst the HQ ground floor is still in use by Democratic Services, nine spaces will remain in the HQ underground car park. Civic cars will remain in the HQ underground car park whilst committee functions are being delivered from HQ.

Committees – if during committees at HQ, the basement parking is full, Members who have provided their details, including registration number, to Qwest can park at Castle Square or Market car park.

Implementation of team moves and next steps

Before commencing team moves there is additional work to be carried out as outlined below.

- Over the coming weeks we will be consolidating team space within HQ in order to create show space on the 3rd and 4th floors for potential tenants. Until tenants are secured these will be used as hot desk/meeting space.
- Most team moves will be triggered when new tenancy agreements have been confirmed. It is anticipated that all teams will be given three months' notice before being required to move. There are some interim moves that will take place that make sense from a business and customer perspective.
- We are currently in the process of drawing up plans showing where team spaces will be in each of the new locations.
- We are also in the process of allocating all of the required ICT equipment/technology to enable staff to move to the new way of working.
- Plans are in place for a big clear out in order to free up space for more people to move into our corporate buildings - a co-ordinated disposal of surplus/broken furniture, and paper will be happening over the coming weeks in HQ, Civic Way and Wyvern House.
- A building refresh/cleaning will take place prior to moving staff into their new locations, particular in Civic Way and Wyvern House

- Training has been developed for all managers and teams to support the new way of working, which are being actively attended by staff

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