

# **Meeting: Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee**

**Date:** 6 February 2017

**Title:** Office Accommodation Review – Update

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**Wards affected:** All

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## **1. Purpose of Report**

Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee received a presentation on 7 September 2015 setting out the buildings within scope of the Office Accommodation Project and achievements to date in rationalising the operational estate. Updates were provided at the meetings held on 5 September, 3 October and 7 November 2016.

The purpose of this report is to provide an updated position for members of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee are asked to note the progress of the Office Accommodation Project.

## **3. Details**

### **Background**

- 3.1 The Agile Working and Office Accommodation Project is a commitment by Capita to deliver property savings for the Council. Initially, this was to implement Agile Working within Quadrant East and West but at the request of the Council, the scope was extended in March 2013 to include all of the Council's Hub and Spoke buildings and a further 16 office buildings with a view to rationalisation in order to reduce costs. The Council further extended the scope in July 2014 to include wider operational buildings.

The Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) acts as the Project Board for this project as well as the Council's Service Delivery Review to ensure that both of these projects converge to find workable solutions for communities as well as delivering property savings for the Council. Progress and property implications are considered by the Strategic Property Group (SPG) which is chaired by the Elected Mayor.

## 3.2 Progress to date

Since the last detailed report to Committee in September 2016, the following progress has been made:

### ***Camden House***

The building was vacated by operational services in September 2013 with the lease due to expire in 2019. The Committee received an update in September 2016 that there was renewed commercial interest in subletting. These negotiations with the interested parties are still progressing.

### ***Meadow Well Centre***

Vacated by operational services in July 2014. Since the last update to committee, the sale of the building to the Cedarwood Trust has now completed.

### ***Youth Village***

Following the relocation of a number of teams to both Quadrant and locality teams, discussions are ongoing with an interested Voluntary Sector Organisation to take ground floor accommodation as a training facility from early 2018. An offer is also due to be made to the CCG to take an additional first floor room for health use from mid-February 2017. The PALS (Personal Achievement through Learning Support) school based offer will continue to occupy rooms within the building.

### ***The Cedars***

As part of the Better Care Fund (BCF) funding agreement and BCF Plan for 2016/17, North Tyneside CCG vacated the building in December 2016. The Housing Strategy Team are now finalising an options paper on the future use of the site to be considered at the next meeting of Strategic Property Group (SPG) in February.

### ***Howdon Community Centre***

The building is currently hosting a team of staff from Family Gateway (previously known as Tyne Gateway), for an initial period of one year, to explore compatibilities and work approaches between the two services. Given the crossover in user base and range of Family Gateway clients in Howdon, it was agreed to explore this while the Council decided upon its wider accommodation strategy. It is expected that a solution for this building will be known within the next 6 months.

### ***Wallsend CFC (top floor)***

Separate briefings have been provided to the Committee on this building as part of the October and November 2016 updates. It has been agreed with the Committee that a more detailed briefing on this building will be provided in early Spring, when all outstanding matters associated with the ongoing discussions and negotiations with colleagues from Regeneration and New River Developments are concluded linked to the long term solution for Wallsend Forum and Wallsend CFC.

### ***Shiremoor Centre***

Following the relocation of VODA to Tyne Metropolitan College, SPG supported a phased relocation of Moorbridge School and the associated works to the Shiremoor Centre and the subsequent move of the North Tyneside Disability Forum (NTDF) in to the existing Moorbridge building. The initial legal process has now commenced with

the respective legal teams finalising the arrangements. It is expected that all moves will be concluded as part of the Easter holiday period to minimise any disruption to both the school and the NTDF.

### ***Quadrant Campus***

Strategic Property Group has agreed to the phased subletting of Quadrant West. The first floor has now been vacated of all staff, furniture and equipment pending the conclusion of the legal documentation. It is expected that all legal arrangements will be concluded by end of January to allow the occupation of the first floor. Options around further phasings will be considered by Strategic Property Group as opportunities arise.

### ***Irving House***

Committee will recall that the Council was committed to a lease of Irving House until the termination date of 24 December 2016. The lease has now expired and Irving House no longer remains as an operational building for the Council. Colleagues from the Property Team within Capita, are now in the process of agreeing / finalising the dilapidations for the building in accordance with the original terms of the lease.

### ***Depot Solution***

The Investment Programme Board (IPB) gave approval in October 2014 for the relocation of key services from the Killingworth Site to the White Swan Centre and the completion of some essential maintenance works to the existing Killingworth Buildings.

In September 2015 SPG considered detailed proposals on the final two shortlisted options and was minded to recommend the new build option to Cabinet and full Council for approval in line with the budget setting process.

On 12 October 2015, Cabinet gave approval to declare the Killingworth site surplus to requirements in principle. A without prejudice tendering exercise was undertaken.

A report outlining the recommendation to accept tender 2 as the preferred bidder for the Killingworth site was approved at Cabinet on 11 July 2016. Cabinet also gave approval for the new build depot solution to be progressed.

The final terms associated with the Killingworth disposal have now been provisionally agreed with the preferred Bidder, These draft final terms were considered and cleared by relevant Cabinet Members at a briefing meeting held on 29 November 2016.

The matter is now to be taken forward for formal approval as a Delegated Decision.

Regarding the new build depot solution. Officers have now presented information to the Investment Programme Board and continue to take forward detailed negotiations with the service users as part of the overall design development. The current indicative milestones for the project are:

- January 2017 – August 2017 – Scope/Specification/Detailed Design/Planning
- September 2017 – September 2018 – Construction
- October 2018 – December 2018 – Mobilisation/Occupation
- January 2019 – New Depot fully Operational

All of the above milestones are subject to the formal governance arrangements as part of the reporting process for the project linked to both the Strategic Property Group and the Investment Programme Board

### ***White Swan (linked to Depot Solution)***

Following the final agreement from all services, linked to their schedule of requirements, the works to support the relocation of Care Call and CCTV Operations are now complete. The Care Call teams have now relocated and the CCTV Operations Team will relocate to coincide with their new camera network and management system which is currently subject to a procurement exercise.

### ***0 – 19 Children Services Locality Teams***

As previously mentioned to the Committee the relocation and integration of locality teams to 4 buildings to implement new Prevention and Early Help strategy and plans were all concluded July 2016. In addition to this, from 1 April 2017 the locality teams will also accommodate the Public Health Service (health visitors and school nurses) who are TUPE transferring to the Council from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

The locality teams are operational in the following locations:

- Riverside Children's Centre
- Howdon Children's Centre
- Shiremoor Children's Centre; and
- Whitley Bay Customer First Centre.

### ***Linskill Trust Pilots***

A number of pilot arrangements are currently under consideration by the Linskill Trust. Reports detailing the options and opportunities for the Linskill Trust Pilots will be considered at forthcoming and future meetings of the SPG. These include:

- Royal Quays Community Centre – The Trust to manage as a one year pilot from 1<sup>st</sup> April subject to SPG approval in February.
- Battle Hill Multi Use Community Centre – potential to incorporate into the above arrangement subject to SPG approval in February.
- Wallsend Children's Centre – Interest from the Trust to be discussed and considered further.
- Oaktrees Nursery – Interest from the Trust to be discussed and considered further.

### ***Community Hub Model***

The TOM describes delivering face-to-face services to residents and business through 'Community Hubs'. Community Hubs are envisaged to offer a number of services via a reduced number of outlets – creating efficiencies for the Council and improving the customer experience and outcomes for residents.

A cross service project group has been set up to define more widely what we think the customer offer will be in the Hubs.

The group is in the process of considering:

- What we mean by 'community hubs'.
- What the customer experience will be / how customers would access services.
- How / if we differentiate between delivering Tier 1, 2, 3 services and what this would mean to customers.
- How we would organise ourselves to deal with tier 2/3 queries via the Hubs.
- The possibilities for use of self-serve technology in the Hubs.
- What impact this might have on the services Engie currently provide for us in the Customer First Centres.
- Where we think the Hubs should be based.
- What services we think we'd provide from the different buildings.

An initiative is being led by Cultural Services and Adult Social Care to explore working practice at Wallsend Customer First centre as a 'model' community hub. A workshop session with staff from across service areas has been undertaken with positive feedback. Practical action planning arising from discussions is currently underway as part of the cross service project group to review working practices based upon existing building use.

### **3.3 Next Steps and Further Rationalisation**

Further building rationalisation continues to be driven by service re-design and the Council's Target Operating Model (TOM). As part of the Council's budget setting process for 2017/18 a number of options and opportunities will be considered to maximise the use of the wider property portfolio/operational estate.

All Property impacts of the TOM will be presented to the Strategic Property Group as part of the governance arrangements in place.