

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 NOVEMBER 2012

SUBJECT:	OFFICE RATIONALISATION
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL WARDS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee in respect of the office rationalisation programme
- 1.2 Rationalisation of the Council's administrative accommodation will support the corporate priority of improving the efficiency and value for money of Council services and will result in financial savings to the Council.
- 1.3 Office rationalisation is not a statutory duty.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The report be noted

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 This update is provided for information.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Members last received an update on office rationalisation on 1 October 2012.
- 4.2 In respect of individual buildings within the rationalisation programme the present position is as follows:

Bebington Town Hall

IT services are arranging for the servers and communication links to be removed from the building and redirected as necessary. A detailed project plan depends on work that is required to be undertaken by BT, and at this stage it is still estimated that all IT connections should have been removed by April 2013.

Bebington Town Hall Annexe

Meetings have been arranged with building occupiers to agree alternative locations.

Liscard Municipal Building

Meetings have been arranged with building occupiers to agree alternative locations.

Old Courthouse, Wallasey

Work to move the Moreton one stop shop and integrate it with the library is due to start in January 2013, the work programme will be for six weeks. The accommodation will then be prepared to allow relocation of the Old Courthouse staff to Moreton. It is estimated that the works should take 8 weeks and consist primarily of security & IT requirements. It is planned to vacate the Old Courthouse by April 2013.

4.5 Birkenhead Town Hall

Work commenced on 12th November to replace the Fire Alarm, this being phase 1 of a programme to bring the Town Hall back into main use within the Office Rationalisation Project.

Early consultation with the Conservation Officer has taken place and work to refurbish the first floor is scheduled to begin week commencing 3 December 2012 with completion early July 2013.

4.6 Wallasey Town Hall

Cabinet on 8 November 2012 accepted the tender from Lockwoods Construction for the scheme to install two additional staircases and a second lift (to address issues over means of escape and access).

Anticipated start date is during January 2013 with completion July 2013.

Building occupiers will be updated regularly on progress and informed of anticipated disturbance. Some events & meetings have been diverted to Birkenhead Town Hall.

Refurbishment of the existing lift will commence after the completion of the contract for the new lift & fire escape project. Anticipated start date August 2013.

Works on the third floor to create open plan office accommodation is expected to commence before Christmas, subject to listed building consent. The alterations and refurbishment are expected to take six weeks.

4.7 Cheshire Lines

A scheme to replace the existing electrical & data infrastructure to enable more intensive use of the accommodation is being drawn up. It is anticipated to issue tenders in early December with a view to commence works at the beginning of February.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Risk management for office rationalisation takes place within the governance arrangements of the Strategic Change Programme.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Options for accommodation change are developed and considered within the Strategic Change programme.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation is undertaken with staff and services affected by building rationalisation and/or office moves.

7.2 Consultation is now taking place on a budget option for the closure of a further administrative building in Birkenhead – Finance Municipal Building – and on the proposed closure of Acre Lane. The outcome will be reported to Cabinet as part of the overall consultation.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are no implications in this report for voluntary, community or faith groups.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 Financial – The rationalisation programme will proceed in line with available capital and revenue resources.

9.2 IT Implications. Weekly meeting coordinate the deployment of IT Resources.

9.3 Staffing – none beyond those referred to in the body of this report

9.4 Asset Management implications are dealt with in the body of the report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed for the office rationalisation programme. A detailed EIA will be completed for each building identified for closure. An initial EIA has been completed for the budget option for the closure of two further buildings.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Closure of buildings will reduce the Council's CO2 emissions.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific Planning and Community Safety implications associated with this report.

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Office Accommodation	24th June 2010
Cabinet – The Former Birkenhead Town Hall	22nd July 2010
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee Office Rationalisation	18th November 2010
Cabinet – Office Rationalisation	25th November 2010
Cabinet – Capital Programme	21st February 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee Office Rationalisation and Agile Working	31st January 2011
Cabinet – Capital Programme & Capital Funding	21st February 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee Office Rationalisation	16th March 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Office Accommodation Update Report	12th July 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Office Accommodation Update Report	15th September 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Office Accommodation and Agile Working	17th November 2011
Cabinet – Office Rationalisation	2nd February 2012

Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Office Accommodation Update Report	26th March 2012
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Office Accommodation Update Report	1st October 2012