

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

REPORT TO:	All Members
REPORT NO:	COHE/41/20
DATE:	24 November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Chief Officer Housing and Economy
CONTACT OFFICER:	Catherine Pritchard (Tel 292444)
SUBJECT:	Overview of Office Accommodation Review Project – Update on Phases 3, 4 and 5
WARD:	All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide Elected Members with an update on the Office Accommodation Review Project (OAR).

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Approval was granted in January 2020 by Executive Board to progress with phase 3 the refurbishment of Crown Buildings to address the long term future of the building and to further ensure grant funding spend of £2.8m secured through the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) is achieved within the timescales set out by Welsh Government (31 March 2021). The Building will accommodate staff from Social Care, Education & Early Intervention with the creation of a 'Community Health and Wellbeing Area'.
- 2.2 The implementation of this Phase further ensures that the Council continues to implement its office accommodation strategy. With increasing estate costs and a requirement to make

the best use of its office accommodation portfolio, this project will help to deliver future savings by reducing the number of assets required.

3.0 PHASE 3 UPDATE

- 3.1 The funding will see the creation of a state of the art town centre 'Community Health and Well-being Area' within the ground floor of Crown Buildings as well as creating office accommodation to support integrated health and social care teams. The 'Community Health and Wellbeing Area' will provide an integrated health, social care, third sector and community services resource, improving access to information and advice for the citizens of Wrexham and delivering preventative and alternative solutions to care.
- 3.2 It will also become the 'Social Care and Education Hub' and will house the majority of staff from Social Care (Adults and Children's combined) and Education & Early Intervention.
- 3.3 The building will provide a modern, flexible workspace for approximately 350 employees at any one time, (subject to Covid-19 space restrictions) but because of flexible working, will be accessed by about 550 employees and partner organisations within Wrexham town centre, which will assist in supporting the local economy.
- 3.4 Due to the scale of the works to be undertaken, the building is required to be vacated for approximately 18 months.
- 3.5 Read Construction had been appointed as the successful contractor to lead on all aspects of the building works. This work commenced in July 2020.
- 3.6 The project is a 60 week refurbishment taking us through to December 2021. This includes an allowance built into the contract to take account of any further impact caused by the Covid-19 restrictions.
- 3.7 A copy of the elevation drawings for Crown Buildings showing the approved design are attached for information (**Appendix 1**).
- 3.8 The design proposals will significantly improve the buildings energy performance which has been a key driver for the scheme from the outset. Read Construction, and its designers have focussed on a "fabric first" approach to improve the overall thermal efficiency of the building envelope to reduce carbon emissions.
 - The existing walls and roof will be upgraded to include high levels of thermal insulation and existing windows and doors will be replaced with new thermally broken powder coated aluminium units with solar control glazing. Combined, this approach will work to retain heat during the winter months and reduce heat gain throughout the summer which will vastly improve on the existing building performance and address current air leakage issues.
 - The existing heating system will be replaced with modern energy efficient boilers and new energy efficient LED lighting will be provided throughout to reduce electricity demand.

- Additionally, the roof area will be fully utilised to house a substantial array of photovoltaic panels which will further improve the building's carbon footprint through on-site renewable energy production. The current Display Energy Certificate (DEC) for the building shows a 'D' rating. Once complete the building will be brought up to an estimated EPC 'B' rating which would demonstrate a significant reduction in carbon emissions and performance comparable with many new build projects.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

4.1 Over the next 12 to 18 months we will work closely with staff, partners and key stakeholders to:

- prepare the building for occupation in terms of furniture design, working closely with Steelcase (furniture designers) which the Council has appointed to advise on the design specification for the office accommodation floors;
- develop the operating arrangements via co-production with all key stakeholders for the building, both in terms of the 'Community Health and Wellbeing Area' and the office accommodation;
- manage the external and internal communications relating to the development of Crown buildings giving opportunity for wider stakeholder consultation;
- prepare staff and partners to work within the modern ways of working framework;
- undertake specific service development activities aligned to the project; and
- manage the physical service moves to Crown Buildings.

5.0 COST PLAN DEVELOPMENT - REFURBISHMENT OF CROWN BUILDINGS

5.1 Tenders were sought for this project on a two stage design and build basis.

5.2 **Stage 1** - Involved contractors submitting their 'preliminary' costs and percentages for overheads and profit. Read Construction was the successful design and build contractor. Its design team is led by Ainsley Gorman Architects. SP Projects was appointed to perform the role of quantity surveyor and Employer's Agent (a contract administration function as set out in the design and build contract). SPP provided an initial estimate based upon the limited design information available at Stage 1. The estimated cost of the project at stage 1 was £5.625m, with a funding package approved by Executive Board, including the ICF grant of £2.8m.

5.3 **Stage 2** – Involved undertaking intrusive survey work, developing the design and specification and agreeing a firm price sum to enter into a contract.

5.4 During the Stage 2 design development phase, the overall costs have increased. The main reasons for this movement has been the inclusion of external and public realm works, enhancing the external cladding and glazing, increased asbestos removal costs and adding PV cells to generate electricity and upgrading the incoming services. The revised cost based

on tenders received is now £6.744m. The cost increase is due to additional work required and the additional funding is being provided from the building repair and maintenance budget (£858k), the Property Asset Improvement Capital Programme (£204k) and Salix funding for the solar panels (£56k). This additional funding is within existing budgets and is for the purpose of building refurbishment work.

- 5.5 The additional works are vital for the project to proceed and fulfil its full potential whilst enabling the Council to achieve its vision to help transform our working practices by providing improved working environments, adopting new technology and digital solutions, making our work more sustainable and promoting good health and wellbeing for all staff.

6.0 PHASES 4 AND 5

- 6.1 To ensure OAR achieves its aim of vacating and handover of Lord Street by December 2022, Phase 4 of OAR will be required to be delivered over the next 2 years and will focus on delivery of refurbishment of Lambpit Street, dilapidation works at Lord Street and the sale of the Old Library.
- 6.2 As we now look to progress and move forward plans for phase 4 refurbishment of Lambpit Street, further work will take place with Chief Officers, Lead Members and staff to enable more detailed plans to be established and accurately costed, whilst working to prepare the building in terms of furniture design and service needs in line with our Modern Ways of Working Principles.
- 6.3 Funding has been identified and secured to undertake Phase 4 and the dilapidation works for Lord Street from the Property Asset Improvement Capital Programme and the repair and maintenance budget in 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- 6.4 Phase 5 (Guildhall) will follow in 2023/24.
- 6.5 The Council has made positive progress through adopting new ways of working and these will continue to be embraced and embedded by transforming our working practices by providing improved working environments, adopting new technology and digital solutions, making our work more sustainable which will be achieved through the continued delivery of the OAR Programme over the coming years.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Elevation drawings for Crown buildings

APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED PERSPECTIVE VIEWS



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COPPER COLOURED RANDKOVN CLADDING IN TWO COLOURS TO MAIN FACADE PLUS THIRD COLOUR TO ENTRANCE
ESTIMATED AREA = 352m²
(JULY CLADDING TO COLUMN FACE)
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METAL SHINGLES CLADDING TO GABLE - COLOUR 1
ESTIMATED AREA = 56m²
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STANDING SEAM CLADDING TO GABLE ENDS & STAIR CORE WITH FEATHER CHEVRON IN SECOND COLOUR
ESTIMATED AREA = 90m²
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PERFORATED METAL PANEL TO 2 NO. STAIR CORES

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT
1	PERFORATED METAL PANEL	100	M ²
2	STANDING SEAM CLADDING	90	M ²
3	METAL SHINGLES CLADDING	56	M ²
4	COPPER COLOURED RANDKOVN CLADDING	352	M ²
5	GLASS	1000	M ²
6	CONCRETE	1000	M ²
7	PAVING	1000	M ²
8	LANDSCAPING	1000	M ²
9	PLANTING	1000	M ²
10	TOTAL	1000	M ²

REF USE OF CROWN BUILDINGS, WREXHAM for WREXHAM CDC

PROPOSED PERSPECTIVE VIEWS 1

DATE	BY	FOR	REVISION
15/03/2023	AG	FOR CLIENT APPROVAL	1

