

Report to Stronger Council Committee

Date of meeting: 13th April 2021

Portfolio: Leader (Councillor C Whitbread)

Subject: Accommodation update

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee note the summary of progress on the Accommodation Programme as at 25th March when this report was written and any verbal updates.

Executive Summary

As planned, refurbishment is in the final stage of completion and handover with snagging underway. Furniture is now installed and it has created a modern and 21st century place to work, where the space can be used in a flexible way that suits employees and members. Audio Visual equipment is also in the final stages of testing.

An initial meeting with the community hub partners has been held, with several organisations committed to the vision of core offerings, joint support and guidance and community space and activities.

A positive meeting with Essex libraries and portfolio holders took place, where they were encouraged by the light open space that had been created and the additional spaces that could be used for community events.

There has been a huge effort by the organisation to clear out the existing space in the Conder. It has highlighted that as a council we can contribute towards the climate change emergency, by relying less on paper by streamlining services and also storing data and documents within the cloud.

A new print to post service is currently in pilot development stages with democratic services, which will reduce the amount of printing that will take place within the Civic. This will also allow the council to save costs on paper and print equipment and will mean resources can be refocused on more value-add activity.

With the 2nd floor now available for viewings, we have had some very positive interest which we are hoping results in offers being made.

As social restrictions are in place until the end of June and there is a need to utilise the building for elections activity, there will be a phased return to occupying the building. This will commence on the 12th April and individuals will attend induction sessions through May and June.

The refurbishment continues to be within the agreed budget and is forecasting a positive variance.

Reason for decision: No decision required.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. However, any implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible Service Director.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues with the district. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible Service Director.

Consultation Undertaken:

Programme updates provided to:
Leadership Team
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Stronger Council Select committee

Background Papers:

Risk Management:

There are no risk management issues arising from this report. Relevant issues arising from re-planning or actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible service director and communicated to the Corporate Risk Management Group.