



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

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FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING

Executive

19 October 2016

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

Control Centre Relocation & Facilities Upgrade

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Community Direction)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members approval to relocate and upgrade the existing Control Centre facility based at Clarendon House, Hinckley, to the former Wardens house based at Castle Court, Burbage.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members agree:

- 2.1 To relocate the existing Control Centre from its current office based at Clarendon House, Hinckley to the former Wardens house at Castle Court, Burbage.
- 2.2 To include within the scope of the works, improvements to IT infrastructure, staff facilities and working environment and inclusion of remote working space for HBBC staff.
- 2.3 That the relocation, upgrade and associated costs are funded from the HRA – Community Alarm Upgrade Reserve.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Control Centre was established in 1987 to provide both a 24/7 response to older and vulnerable council tenants living in council properties with access to a community alarm (pull cord alarm), and to provide council out of hours services such as Housing Repairs, Environmental Health & Homeless provision.
- 3.2 Nearly 30 years on, control centre services have evolved and increased, particularly around the lifeline service which is delivered and available to all residents within the borough, offering a 24/7 monitoring and response service, and currently monitoring nearly 6,000 alarms. Similarly, floating support services to tenants have been increased over the last three years and are now delivered by three members of staff

who work from the Control Centre relying on the up to date information available at the centre to carry out their role. In addition whilst council services can be accessed during office hours via the Customer Contact Centre based at The Hub, the Control Centre is the main point of contact for residents out of working hours, weekends and public holidays. The combined effect of delivering these services equates to on average a total of 3,600 calls being made or received at the Control Centre each week.

- 3.3 In 2013 the Control Centre operating equipment was upgraded, which increased our ability to offer additional services, such as corporate lone worker monitoring and telecare provision and monitoring. A further report was approved by the Executive in January 2015 following extensive consultation with residents, which endorsed the recommendation to continue providing Control Centre services following the removal of Supporting People funding from the County Council.
- 3.4 Operating from a converted ground floor flat in Clarendon House a sheltered housing scheme, the Control Centre consists of a control room, office/store room, toilet and a kitchen area which is also used as the schemes communal kitchen and shared with residents. During the working day there can be up to five members of staff working from the two small rooms within the Control Centre, space is predominately occupied by the Control Centre operating equipment, which consists of two work stations and a server. In addition there are two PC's and printer. Lifeline alarms and other telecare equipment is also stored at the Control Centre. The small working environment not only means that there is often no working space for officers, but also means that there is increased noise which has the potential to affect Control Operators ability to handle calls received at the Control Centre.
- 3.5 The new Control Centre will enable us to provide a wider range of services to the whole of the community, particularly to those suffering from Dementia or other progressive illness. Equipment that can be installed in residents' homes to support their independence and monitor wellbeing will be more readily available with increased storage, enabling us to respond to service requests from residents, their families and carers.
- 3.6 In developing this proposal the views and experiences of staff working at the Control Centre have sought and considered and subject to approval a more formal consultation will take place with staff affected by the relocation.
- 3.7 In addition to the issues highlighted, the Control Centre deals with largely sensitive data and calls requiring an emergency response, access to the Control Centre is also required throughout the day and night and weekends. It is also important to point out that in the event of The Hub being unable to operate because of an unforeseen event such as telephone line failure, office closure/evacuation, the Control Centre would act as the emergency back up and therefore would need to operate outside the main Hub building to support business continuity arrangements for the council.
- 3.8 The three bedroom Warden house at Castle Court has been selected as potential new site, for several reasons, including its size, location and parking. The house is integral to the Castle Court building and accessed via the sheltered housing scheme, property.
- 3.9 Relocating the Control Centre, including improved IT, not only improves the working environment for staff, but also enables us to provide additional drop down working and meeting space for other council staff outside the main Hub building.

3.10 Discussions have taken place with housing repairs and ICT to discuss and scope the proposed relocation of the Control Centre. The financial implications below include costings for the conversion works (estimated to be £28,000) and for updated and improved ICT provision (estimated to be approximately £10,000). Technical advice has been sourced from Tunstall Communications, our Control Centre equipment supplier, who have provided costs of supporting the relocation in terms of removing and reconnecting equipment from the current Control Centre to the new premises and totalling approximately £4000.

3.11 Whilst further work will be needed to confirm these costs, the estimated total cost to relocate the Control Centre will be approximately £42,000, and it is recommended that a supplementary budget request is made and that this work is funded from the HRA - Community Alarm Upgrade Reserve which currently holds £152,000.

4. EXEMPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

4.1 The report is to be taken in open session.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [TF]

5.1 The total cost of relocation is expected to be £42,000.

5.2 It is proposed the total cost of the scheme is funded from the HRA Piper Reserve which currently has a balance of £151,939. The table below summaries the estimated position for the reserve:

Balance at 31 March 2016	£151,939
Contribution to reserve in 2016/17	£10,400
Control Centre relocation costs	£(42,000)
Forecast Balance 31 March 2017	£120,339

From the estimated 2016/17 year end balance of £120,339, a further £105,000 has been earmarked for future improvements to the Community alarm system.

5.3 The property at Castle court is currently vacant. In 2015/16 the void rental loss was £3,844.

5.4 Should the property at Clarendon House become lettable the budgeted income would be £3,487.

5.5 In accordance with financial procedure rules the use of the reserve will require Executive approval

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [AR]

6.1 As set out within the proposed costings of the proposed works the Council will be required to submit a planning application. This will seek permission for the change of use of Warden House.

7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The proposed relocation of the Control Centre including improved IT infrastructure provides opportunities to improve efficiency, and provide a wider range of services to

residents and partners across the borough and in doing this seeks to support the following Corporate Aims:

Improve health & wellbeing

Identify & support the most vulnerable people

Identify & plan to meet the needs of the aging population

Effective, efficient and pro-active services

Accessible services for all

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation will form part of the normal planning process with local residents, members of Sheltered Housing Working Group have also been made aware of our intentions to seek approval to relocate the Control Centre and are generally supportive, however more specific consultation meetings will be held with residents of both Castle Court and Clarendon House once the report has been considered.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

9.1

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Unforeseen costs, leading to a need to increase the budget.	More accurate costings obtained and project plan developed to oversee project and spending. [Clive Taylor
Opposition to the proposals from local residents through the planning process and consultation meetings	Advice sought from Planning colleagues prior to submission of planning application.	Mark Tuff

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Control Centre provides services to the whole of the community, but particularly to older, vulnerable and disabled people who may require assistance at any time of the day or night. In addition the Control Centre provides 24 hour emergency response services to residents, business and other organisations within the borough when the Council is closed. These include:
- Environmental Services
 - Lone Working monitoring
 - Homelessness
 - Housing Repairs
- 10.2 As the demand on these services grows it is essential that the premises in which these services are monitored and operated from are fit for purposes and able to deal with this increased demand.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
 - Environmental implications
 - ICT implications
 - Asset Management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human Resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data Protection implications
 - Voluntary Sector
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