

ACCOMMODATION ISSUES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr E Woodburn

LEAD OFFICER: Sue Borwick

REPORT AUTHOR: Chris Lloyd

Summary: This report identifies implications for the accommodation of staff within the New Council Centre as a result of the Council Restructuring.

Recommendation:	Executive is asked to approve the proposal to relocate and contain staff within the present accommodation at the Copeland Centre, and to provision of the required funding of £33,000, as noted in section 3.1 of this Report and Appendix A.
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Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan: Essential that the accommodation requirements of the restructuring are addressed in order to maximise efficiency.

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): None

Financial and human resource implications: Funding of £33,000 is required for the relocation within the Copeland Centre to be made available from the 2005/6 savings made through grant and sinking fund changes within the PFI project.

Project & Risk Management: Project management techniques have been applied to this process.

Key Decision Status

- **Financial:** None
- **Ward:** None

Other Ward Implications: None

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The relocation to the Copeland Centre was initiated in 1999 when an accommodation Strategy Review was undertaken.

This was reviewed and updated to include all permanent posts in 2003, with changes made to the building layout, furniture and IT/ telephone provision to accommodate the level of staff at the time the contract for the new building was signed.

At the time of the staff relocation on 18 September 2004 the Council restructure proposals had not been finalised and staff were moved to the new building within the existing structure.

As only Heads of Service were identified at this time, and some indications of other likely changes could be anticipated some minor layout adjustments were made to the locations of the Business Units and to initiate provision for offices for the Heads of Service.

It was known and understood at this time that these arrangements were temporary and that further consideration would be required once the final restructure was completed.

- 1.2 Now that this restructure has been finalised and a list of posts has been produced it has been possible to consider how the new Service units can best be accommodated within the building.

Whilst it is preferable for each service unit to occupy a dedicated area, so as to retain all the staff together as teams and to enable each Head of Service to efficiently control their Units, it is considered that this cannot be achieved without creating additional space through relocation of some staff out with the building. However, elements of the restructure included building in flexibility and encouraging cross department or corporate thinking and activity.

The proposal within this Report does mean that the Environmental Health section, which is now part of the Leisure and Environmental Services Unit, will remain located at Catherine Street whilst the remainder of the Service Unit is located at Moresby Parks. This does reduce the opportunity taken in the restructure to have less and more flexible admin/support staff serving the entire Service Unit.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 Considerations relating to the accommodation are summarised below:
- 2.2 The movements of staff from one Service Unit to another are noted, these do have implications for the management and location of the staff:

Payroll – moves to Policy and performance
I T - moves to Finance
Benefit Fraud – some staff now in Customer Services, some in Finance
Cash Collection – moves to Customer Services
Copeland Direct - moves to Customer Services
Environmental Health – moves to Leisure and Environmental Services
Asset management - Public Buildings/Valuation – moves to Finance
Land Drainage/Coastal protection – moves to Leisure and Environmental Services

- 2.3 One new additional Service unit is created:

Sustainability and Nuclear Policy

- 2.4 Service Units are renamed and sizes changed:

Numbers of staff within service units are substantially amended in both numbers and composition.

- 2.5 In general terms the number of staff is relatively similar pre/post restructure, however, because of the movement of staff from one Service Unit to another, and after considering all combinations, it is not possible to consolidate each Service Unit within it's own discrete area, and whichever layout is chosen there is at least one Service Unit which will be split up and located on a number of different floors. This arrangement does compromise the other Service Units to some extent.

Within the current proposal, which is subject to consultation and final agreement, the Policy and Performance Service Unit will be spread over all four floors of the building: Ground Floor: Copeland Direct, Cash Collection, Revenues Benefits and Council Tax, first Floor: Head of Service, Second Floor: Communications, Third Floor: HR, Payroll Policy etc.

A further factor to be taken into account is that there is a number of 'external' and seconded staff accommodated within the building, on short to medium term contracts, for which no specific space is allocated. These will have to be 'fitted in' as best possible by reducing the current amount of space allocated per member of staff generally. The furniture and ICT requirements also need to be considered.

IEG to Dec 2005 – 3 Nr.
GIS to Nov 2005 – 1 Nr.
Cumbria Hub March 2006 – 1 Nr.
Local Plan - 1 Nr
Security - 1 Nr
Property – 1 Nr July 2005.
Sustainability and Nuclear Policy – 1 Nr 2 years.
MVM – 1 Nr July to Dec 2005

Whilst some consideration can be given to developing policies for hot desking, home working and the like, such a process would take some time to complete and would not address the current position.

Should a future implementation of home working and hot desking enable space to be made available there remains the opportunity within the New Council Centre to review the layouts of the Service units in the future.

It is noted that in the future some spare capacity would be desirable as with the changes in local government the Council is involving with others to promote common aims, and may wish to offer accommodation in future to support potential initiatives such as: LSP support team, I T partner, West Lakes Renaissance regeneration team

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The relocation proposals within the Copeland Centre have some cost implications in a small amount of alteration works, some furniture provision, relocation of floor boxes, changing computer/telephone addresses, and 'major moves' costs through the Provider.
- 3.2 The difficulties with the environmental conditions in the Atrium are being dealt with separately through ongoing contact with the Provider London & Regional Properties Ltd.

4 COSTS

The Copeland Centre - £33,000 requested to be funded from 2005/6 savings made through grant and sinking fund changes already reported to Members – see Appendix A.

Provision of office (Customer Services manager)
New furniture screens etc
Major moves
Relocate floor boxes
Additional floor boxes,

Reconfigure voice/data points
Other minor amendments

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Executive is asked to approve the proposal to relocate and contain staff within the present accommodation at the Copeland Centre.
- 5.2 Executive is asked to approve the provision of the required funding of £33,000, as noted in section 4.1 of this Report and Appendix A.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Estimated Costs - The Copeland Centre

List of Background Documents: Project file, committee reports

List of Consultees: Corporate Team, Leader, Deputy leader, Portfolio Holder