

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

30 NOVEMBER 2021

GUN WHARF OFFICE MOVES UPDATE

Report from: Paul Boyd, Head of Business Change

Summary

This paper updates Members on the progress with the office moves to allow the Ministry of Justice to use sections of Level 2 within Gun Wharf for the family courts.

1.0 Budget and Policy Framework

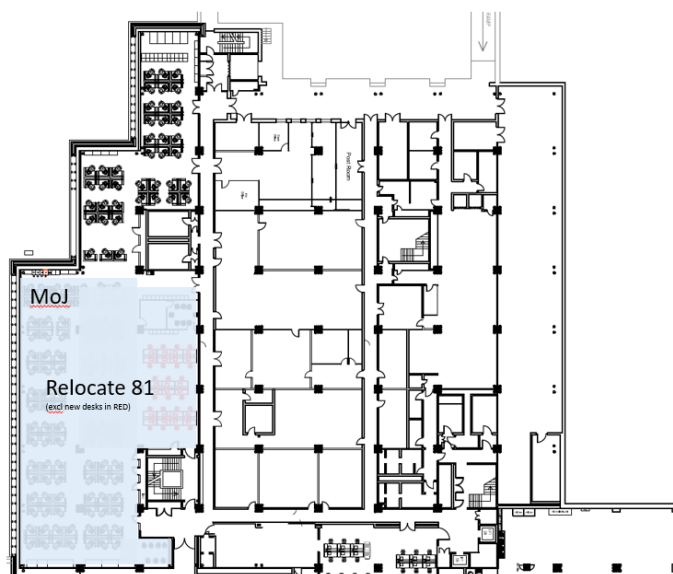
1.1 Whilst there are no specific decisions to be made based on the report, it is important that the Committee is made aware of the changes to Gun Wharf and the impacts on employees.

2.0 Background

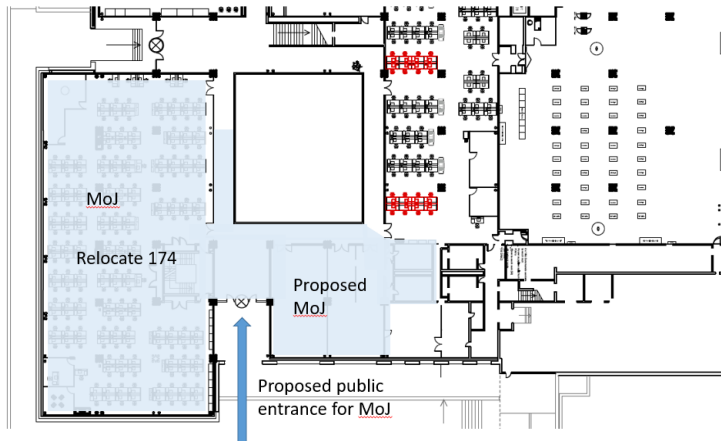
2.1 The Council have negotiated a lease arrangement with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to use areas of Level 2 within Gun Wharf.

2.2 The areas allocated to the MoJ are indicated in the diagrams below:

Ministry of Justice Space



This is the space currently occupied by Housing and Property on Level 2.



This is the area currently occupied by Finance, Public Health and the Civic Suite on Level 2.

2.3 The challenge is to relocate services that are currently in the space allocated to the MoJ.

2.4 The opportunity is to:

- Relocate teams to reflect changes in services
- Relocate teams to promote innovation and collaboration between service areas
- Break down historic silos

3. Approach

3.1 Blanket policies were considered as part of the proposals, e.g.

- No defined service areas
- Bookable hot desks
- Enforce working remotely

3.2 However, although blanket policies can sound fair “on paper”, it is recognised that this is one of those situations where trying to treat everyone equally may actually lead to less equality.

- All staff have different circumstances
- Not everyone has a suitable space at home to work
- Service requirements differ regarding agile/hybrid working
- Flexibility for equalities issues available to all staff to reflect individual circumstances

3.3 We are therefore adopting the following principles:

3.3.1 Services given allocated areas – promote teamwork & facilitate identification of further space reductions.

- 3.3.2 Service Managers able to plan the staff presence required to best suit service delivery – likely to differ between services.
- 3.3.3. Services located to promote innovation & collaboration between teams.
- 3.3.3 Allow service managers to find the best options for their staff to take into account personal circumstances, which should be discussed with teams/individuals, such as:
- fixed desks
 - rotating staff
 - permanent remote staff
- 3.4 A number of “Hot Desks” will still be available throughout Gun Wharf for anyone to use, e.g. for services that do not have a permanent location in the building

4 Alternatives to Gun Wharf

- 4.1 A strand of the programme will promote the use of other council buildings:
- Community hubs
 - Libraries
 - Sports centres
 - Office space
 - One public estate
- 4.2 The project team will work with services that are not based at Gun Wharf to produce a guide for staff detailing how they can use other buildings and what equipment is available.

5 Collaboration Spaces

- 5.1 We will be trialling a range of different options for collaboration spaces/meeting rooms to provide better spaces for team meetings, collaboration exercises, and hybrid meetings with a mix of physical and digital presence.
- 5.2 This will enable us to determine what methods staff prefer to use before rolling out the solutions.
- 5.3 Options to improve the soundproofing and acoustics of Gun Wharf will also be considered to facilitate confidential meetings within meeting rooms and reduce background “office noise” when staff are on TEAMS calls.

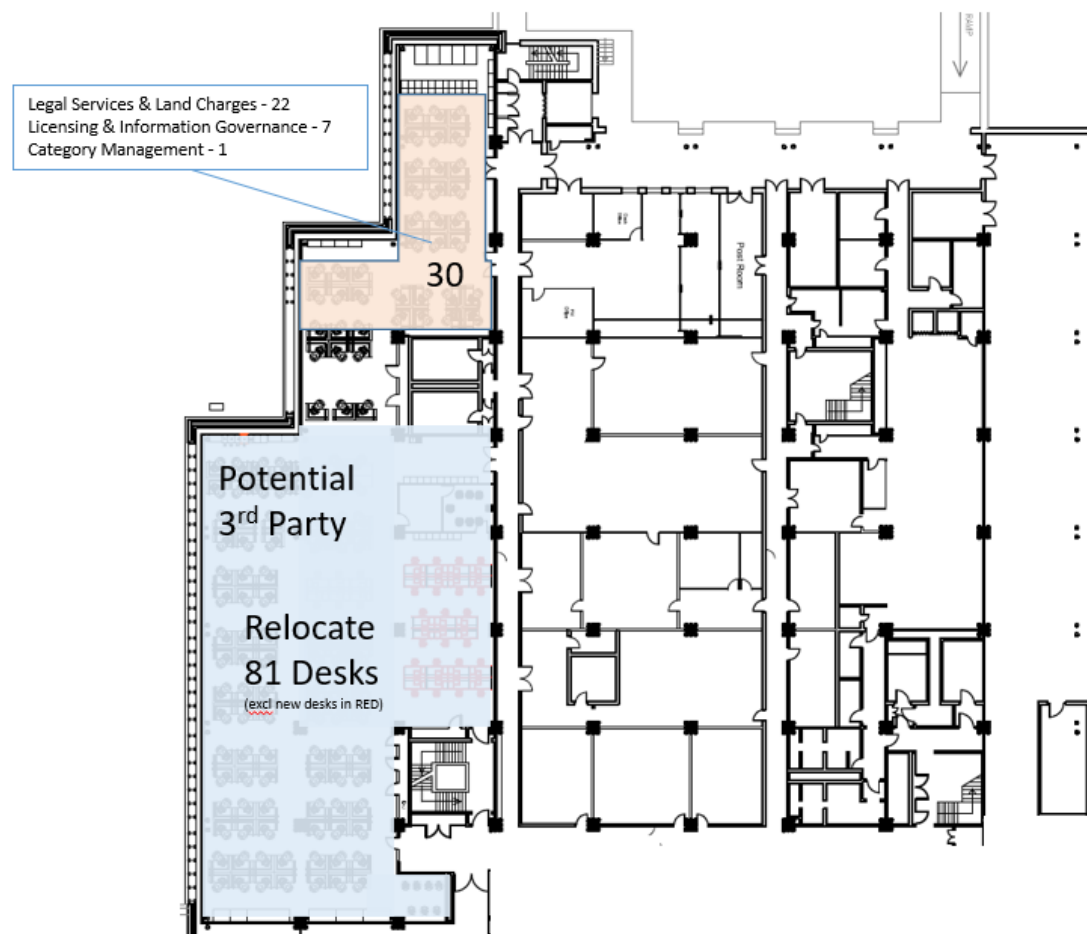
6 Support Services

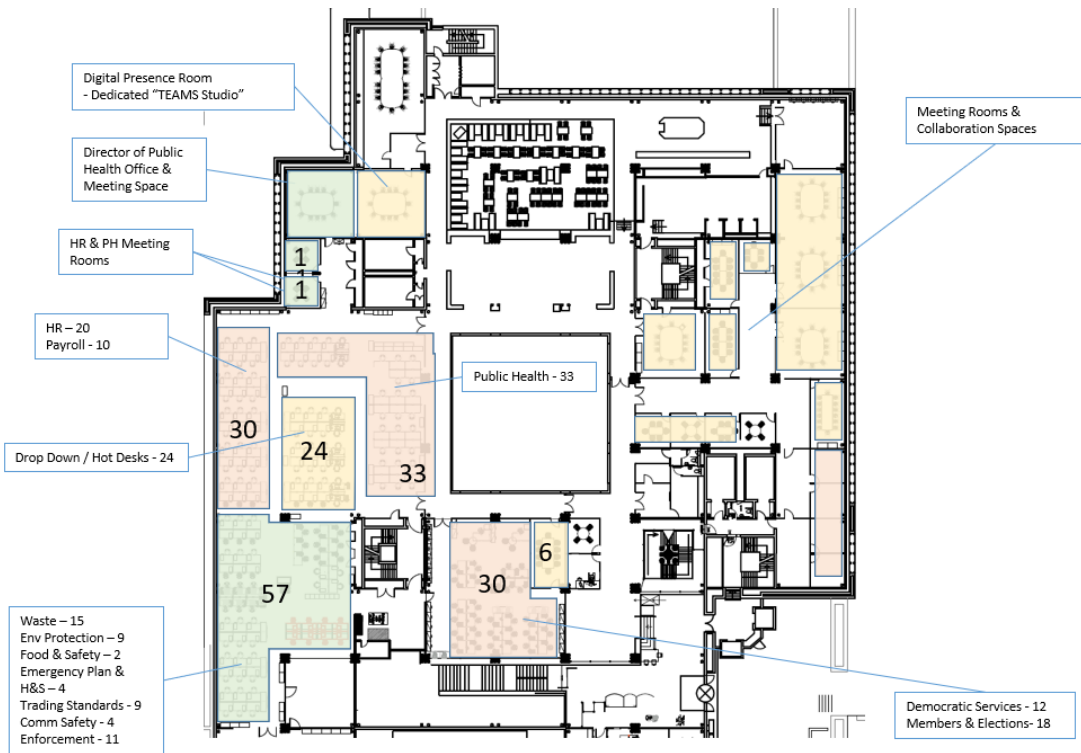
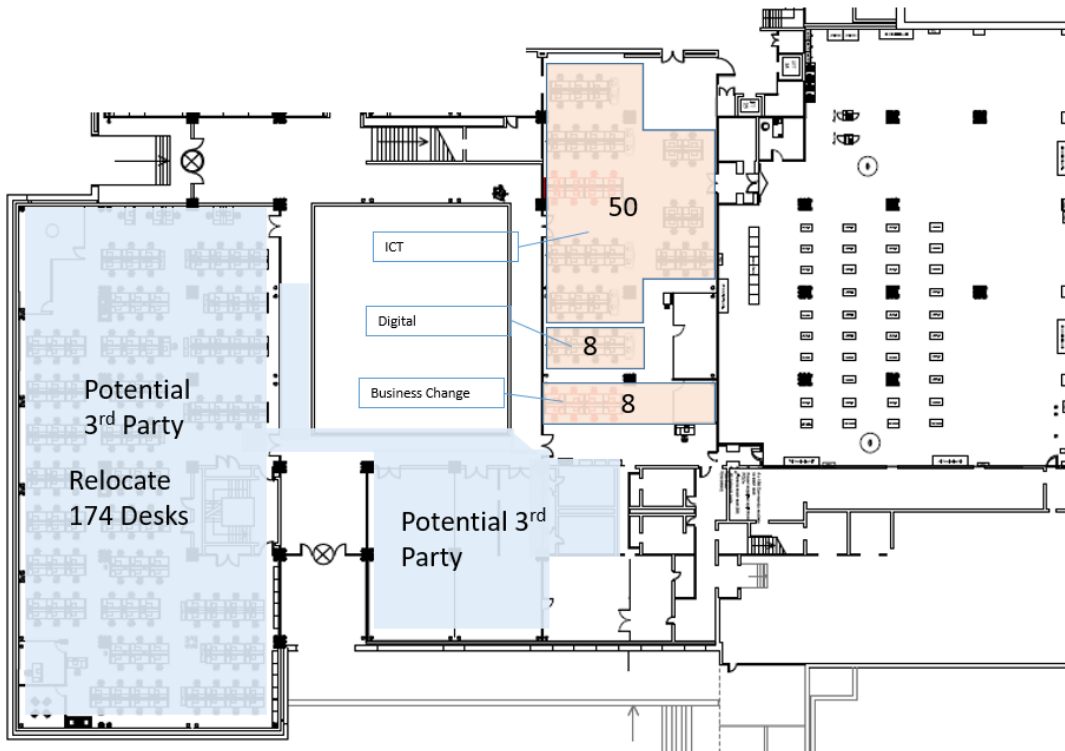
- 6.1 HR have produced the new “Our Ways of Working” policy, which was agreed at the September meeting of this Committee.

- 6.2 ICT are reviewing the equipment required to support staff working remotely, in the office, or in a hybrid way.
- 6.3 We are also working closely with the Property and Health & Safety teams to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for First Aid cover and the safe evacuation of the building in an emergency.
- 6.4 Storage options (lockers, cupboards, cabinets etc.) are also being considered as part of the project. A member of the project team will contact the relevant Service Managers to discuss requirements and look at options.
- 6.5 The workstreams are being pulled together under “Project Phoenix” to coordinate the approach across the Council.

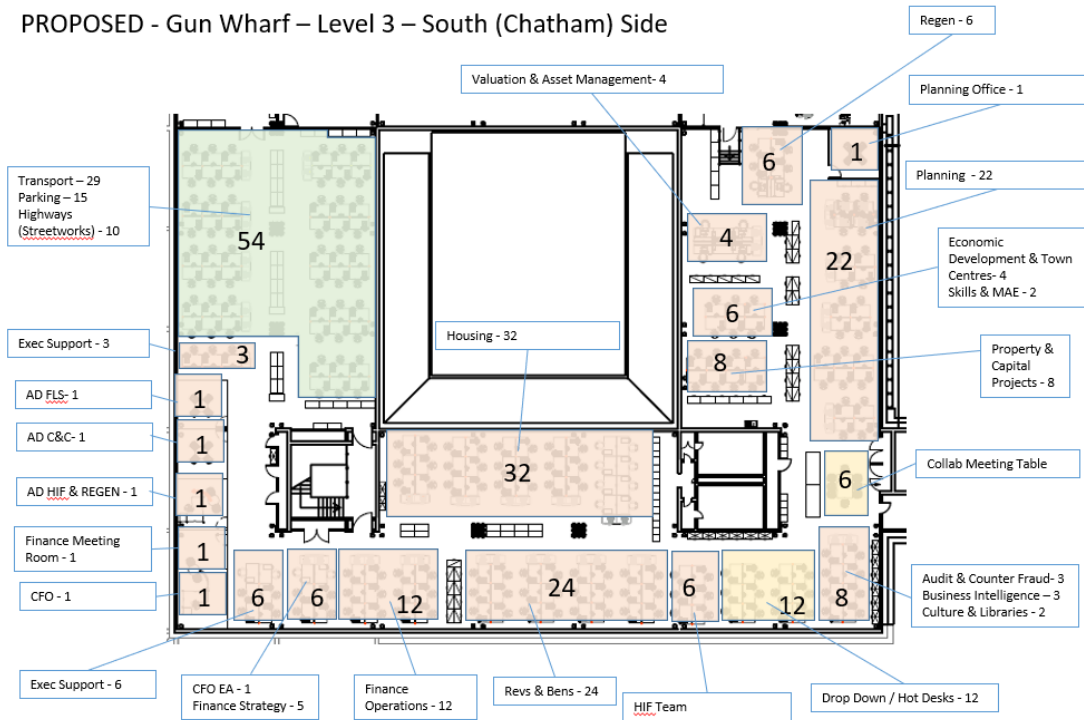
7 Implementation

- 7.1 Work has already commenced to relocate services, following the layout in the diagrams below:

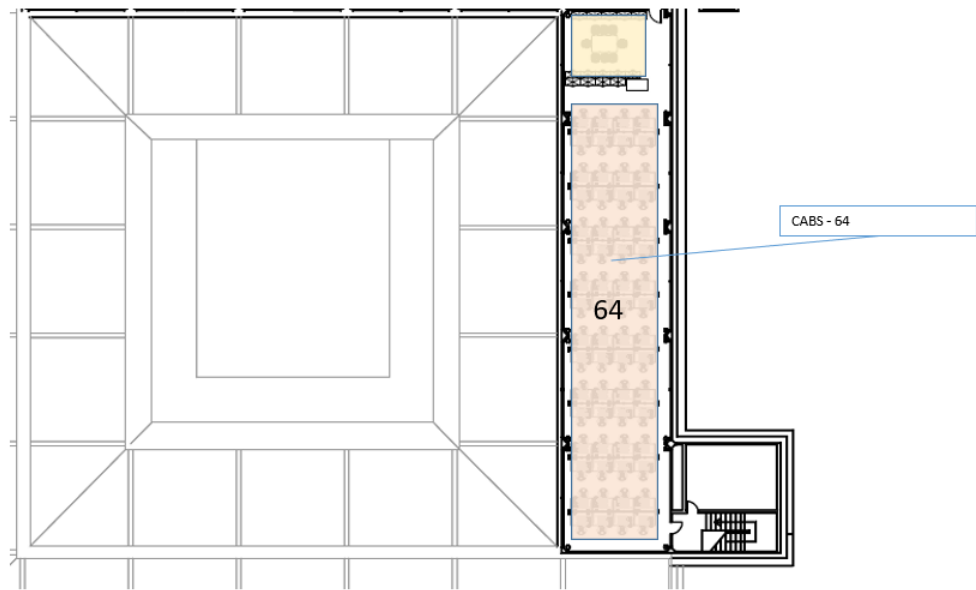




PROPOSED - Gun Wharf – Level 3 – South (Chatham) Side



PROPOSED - Gun Wharf – Level 4 – South (Chatham) Side



7.2 It is proposed that CABS remain within the “call centre” section on Level 4 and incorporate the other elements of CABS into this space. The rest of Level 4 and Level 5 will remain unchanged in this part of the review.

7.3 A second phase of this programme is being developed where we will look at the potential of re-locating staff at Broadside into Gun Wharf, and

other Council buildings, as the lease for Broadside expires in August 2024.

8 Progress To Date

- 8.1 HR and Payroll have completed their moves and the Hot Desk space is available in this area on level three, with brand new equipment ready for use.
- 8.2 The final stage of phase one saw Parking Services relocate to the new designated area for Front Line Services. Followed by other teams within Front Line Services, which was completed in early November.
- 8.3 The CABS service have now relocated fully to Level 4.

9 Future Phases

Phase 2

- 9.1 Planning, Regeneration, Valuation & Asset Management, Economic Development & Town Centres, Property & Capital Projects, Business Intelligence, Culture & Libraries (Gun Wharf desks), and HIF Team will

move into their allocated areas during November.

9.2 Business Change and Digital to relocate to level 2 in November.

Phase 3

9.3 Housing to relocate to their allocated area on Level 3 in November/December.

9.4 Finance (Strategy & Operations), Revenues & Benefits, and Audit & Counter Fraud to relocate to their allocated areas on Level 3 in December.

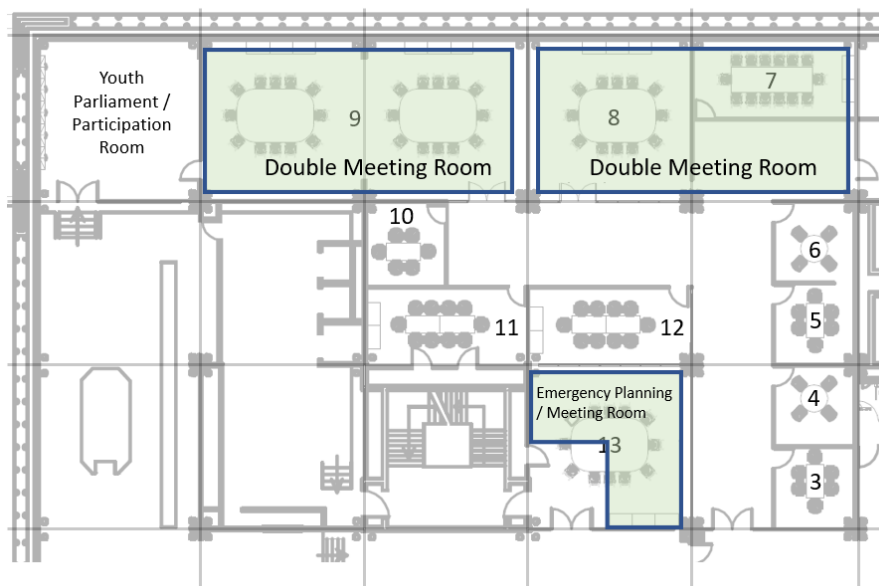
Phase 4

9.5 Public Health to move into their allocated space on Level 3 in December.

10 Meeting Rooms

10.1 To mitigate the loss of the Civic Suite alterations have been made to the meeting room spaces on Level 3 to provide bigger meeting rooms for Council meetings.

10.2 The changes are illustrated below:



11 Timescales

11.1 It is anticipated that Level 2 will be vacated by the end of December 2021.

11.2 The logistics of the moves are currently being implemented and a programme of moves has been developed covering September to December 2021.

11.3 These proposals are based on the assumption that social distancing measures are reduced/removed.

12 Communications

12.1 Staff have been kept fully updated on the moves via regular emails and a dedicated section on the MedSpace intranet, which is constantly updated with the latest information.

12.2 The Head of Business Change is also attending Medway Maker meeting to provide updates and has also attended the Equalities Forum and Disabled Worker forum to present the plans, provide update and receive feedback on the project.

13 Financial implications

13.1 The MoJ will be paying a lease, which is being phased in as they take up occupation.

13.2 A contribution to Gun Wharf overheads will also be made.

14 Legal implications

14.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

15 Risk Management

15.1 The risks for the project are being recorded and managed within the Project Phoenix governance framework and are also reported to Transformation Board.

16 Recommendation

16.1 That the Committee notes the report.

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Appendices:

None

Background papers:

None