

Draft Estates Strategy	15th March 2016
Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Innovation and Transformation
Outcome	Improved service efficiency
Lead Officer	Stephen McMaw
Cost: (If applicable)	Approximately £8000 initial relocation costs with a cost reduction of £44k per annum with the Planning function relocating from County Hall to Cloonavin

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A workshop was held on 7th October 2015 with the aim of commencing engagement with Elected Members regarding the development of an Estates Strategy for the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (the Council).
- 1.2 The four Legacy Councils Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle converged on 1st April 2015 to form the new Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. Each of the four Legacy Councils had their individual organisational structures, methods and locations for the delivery of services. Each Council had a civic headquarters in which a range of core services operated such as Finance, Human Resources, ICT, Environmental Services, Democratic Services and Building Control. Many services operated from locations across the Councils such as Refuse Collection, Maintenance and Leisure and Tourism.
- 1.3 Elected Members have now the opportunity to review the locations for the future delivery of services to ensure the transformation of the new Council over time retains a focus on maximising efficiency, effectiveness and customer service. This will be an iterative process.

2.0 Current Position

- 2.1 The Council severance scheme has provided opportunities for staff to leave the organisation. This has enabled some degree of flexibility in relation to initial relocation of staff for operational purposes.
- 2.2 Elected Members have agreed that the civic headquarters and Council chamber for the new Council is the Cloonavin building in Coleraine. In support of this the Democratic Services Staff from across the Legacy Councils are now based in Cloonavin.
- 2.3 The Human Resources section has also been centralised in Cloonavin in support of the heavy workload associated with recruitment to the new staff structures.
- 2.4 Finance staff still retain a presence across the four Legacy Council sites, however Payroll Staff operate from Cloonavin a number of days each week
- 2.5 The Council has agreed a two year lease agreement to retain the County Hall site for Planning Staff. The cost is included as part of the Department of the Environment transferring functions budget. The lease expires on 31st March 2017.
- 2.6 The majority of remaining staff previously based in Legacy Council civic buildings currently work from those locations.
- 2.7 The number of front line staff (Leisure Centres, Depots, Landfill sites, Harbours) currently based in each of the Legacy Council areas is detailed below. This element of the Estates Strategy will not impact on front line staffing arrangements.
- 2.8 Table 1 illustrates a breakdown of staff employed in front Line Services across the new Council defined by previous Legacy Council Area.

Table 1.

Location	Front line staff Leisure and Development	Front line staff Environmental Services
Ballymoney	44	42
Coleraine	48	124
Limavady	51	58
Ballycastle	14	42

3.0 Elected Member Workshop

3.1 At the workshop on 7th October 2015, Elected Members were asked to discuss six strategic considerations in relation to a future Estates Strategy. These were as follows:

1. No change to current arrangements
2. Consider moving the Planning Section from County Hall to a Council building
3. Retain all buildings initially on a short term basis (2-3 years) and re locate staff in line with Departmental structures and needs and then review.
4. Consider early Closure of one or more Headquarter buildings
5. Consider complete re location eg County Hall
6. Consider new Headquarters build

3.2 Elected Members were presented with background information including the current interim arrangements in place to ensure continuity of service during the convergence period and a staff occupancy analysis and condition survey for each of the Legacy Council Civic Buildings.

4.0 Work shop outcomes

4.1 The general views of the Elected Members participating in the work shop were recorded and analysed as follows:

1. The Planning Section should re locate to Cloonavin, if possible prior to the end of the two year lease on County Hall.
2. Non-front line services should be centralised in Coleraine and Ballymoney, but retain some element of customer facing services.
3. One stop shops for public services should be situated in Ballycastle and Limavady.
4. Explore the option of developing County Hall as a Central Headquarters. This would involve locating non front line services from Cloonavin and Ballymoney to County Hall and retaining the one stop shops in Ballycastle and Limavady.

4.2 At the work shop, Elected Members expressed the view that on the longer term, retention of the Legacy Council Civic Buildings in Ballycastle and Limavady was not the important issue but rather ensuring there is an adequate staff presence to deliver a local public service to the citizens. The concept of a one stop shop in a suitable building within each location was discussed as a potential future alternative to the current arrangement. The one stop shop approach would not necessarily result in a full time presence of staff in all locations to cover the full range of Council functions but rather arrangements would be made to have staff available in local areas as required. A hot desk arrangement will be set up to accommodate satellite working. Hot desking involves work desks with a telephone,

computer, network access and printer facility to enable staff working temporarily at that location to carry out their duties from that site.

- 4.3 It was also recognised that there are currently no suitable alternative Council buildings available as one stop shop locations in Ballycastle and Limavady should the Council decide on this approach. It is therefore likely that in the short to medium term (2-5 years), Council staff will continue to deliver non front line services from the Legacy Council Civic Buildings. Each civic building will have a designated Head of Service staff member with responsibility for the site.
- 4.4 Elected Members also welcomed the opportunity to consider County Hall as a more radical option in relation to centralising non front line services. Elected Members expressed the view that this option should be explored on the short term to ascertain its feasibility.

5.0 County Hall

- 5.1 As a follow up to the Elected Member work shop, contact has been made with the Department of Finance and Personnel who own County Hall. The current situation is that County Hall is not available for purchase and will soon be almost at full occupancy as staff from other Central Government Departments are re locating to County Hall.

6.0 Flexibility of Approach

- 6.1 The Estates Strategy is an iterative process and it is recognised that a flexible approach is required to ensure staff are based in locations to meet the needs of the service and also when practical and appropriate to accommodate specific needs of staff.
- 6.2 In terms of process, the Estates Strategy will be subject to a staff consultation process and on-going discussion with the Trade Unions.

7.0 Departmental Relocation Exercise

- 7.1 With a view to further developing the Estates Strategy, Senior Management Team carried out an exercise on re locating non front line services to reflect the views expressed by Elected Members at the work shop. The exercise also considered the important issues of maximising efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery and availability. One of the key limiting factors is the occupancy capacity of each of the buildings. This is detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

Location	Max Staff Capacity
Riada House, Ballymoney	80
Cloonavin, Coleraine	200
Limavady	70
Sheskburn House, Moyle	52
County Hall	38

7.2 The table below is the out turn of the work undertaken by Senior Management Team. The figures are estimated at a point in time and may vary as the needs of the service develops and as structures are refined.

Table 3.

Non-front line services	Ballymoney Civic Headquarters (Staff Numbers)	Ballycastle Civic Headquarters (Staff Numbers)	Coleraine Civic Headquarters (Staff Numbers)	Limavady Civic Headquarters (Staff Numbers)
Leisure and Development	7	8	61	12
Environmental Services	66	4	25	25
Planning	0	0	40	0
Performance Directorate	3	3	43	3
Finance	1	1	24	1
Total	77	16	185	41

In terms of the actual location arrangement by function, a draft breakdown is attached as Appendix 1.

8.0 Trade Union Consultation

8.1 A number of consultation sessions have taken place with the Joint Consultative Negotiating Committee (JCNC) and Council Officers regarding the draft Estates Strategy. The JCNC is a body consisting of the Trade Unions and Senior Council Officers and is a useful forum for discussing issues that will impact upon staff. The Trade Unions have been fully consulted with the content this report.

9.0 Summary

- 9.1 The development of an Estates Strategy for the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is an iterative process. The first stage in the strategy is to relocate non front line staff to maximise effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of their services. Once a new location arrangement is in place, on-going reviews and adjustments may be required as a fine tuning exercise.
- 9.2 This element of the Estates Strategy will not impact on front line staffing arrangements.
- 9.3 It is recognised that a flexible approach is required to ensure staff are based in locations to meet the needs of the service and also when possible and appropriate to accommodate specific needs of staff.
- 9.4 In a recent workshop, the Council provided direction in relation to retaining services in all four Legacy Council locations and to the Planning Service relocating to Cloonavin before the tenure of the lease expires.
- 9.5 Senior Management Team has undertaken an assessment of how non front line services could be delivered given the new Council geographical spread, service delivery requirements and direction provided by Elected Members.
- 9.6 County Hall is not currently available to the Council however may be a longer term option should the building become vacant.
- 9.7 The Estates Strategy will be subject to a staff consultation process and discussions with the Trade Unions before implementation.
- 9.8 Elected Members are requested to consider the re location arrangement contained in Table 3 of this report as the first stage in the Estates Strategy. The table reflects the views expressed by Elected Members at the workshop held on 7th October 2015 and an analysis of efficiency and effectiveness from a strategic and operational perspective provided from consultation with Management staff across the organisation.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council approve the relocation of non-front line staff as detailed in Table 3 of this report.

Appendix 1.

Non-front line services	Ballymoney Civic Headquarters	Ballycastle Civic Headquarters	Coleraine Civic Headquarters	Limavady Civic Headquarters
Directorates/ Service Areas	Functions	Functions	Functions	Functions
Environmental Services	5.5 Waste Recycling staff	3 Enforcement Staff	18 Building Control Staff	2 Waste Recycling Staff
	31 Environmental Health	1 Business Support	3 Business Support Cloonavin, 4 at depot	17 Made up of Environmental Health and Building Control staff
	9.5 Estates Staff			1 Estates Manager
	7 Infrastructure Staff			3 Business Support, 2 at depot
	13 Business Support			
Finance	1 Finance Support	1 Finance Support	24 Finance Staff	1 Finance Support
Performance	1 Human Resource Support	1 Human Resource Support	11 Human Resource Staff	1 Human Resource Support
	1 ICT Support	1 ICT Support	5 ICT Staff	1 ICT Support
	1 Reception	1 Reception	2 Reception	1 Reception
			Democratic Services/PR	
			Policy Staff	
			Performance	
			Health and Safety	
Planning			Planning Staff	
Leisure and Development	1 Sports Development 2 Community and Culture 4 Economic Development	1 Sports Development Officer 3 Community and Culture 4 Economic Development	10 Sport and Wellbeing Management. 7 Community and Culture 18 Tourism and Recreation 11 Economic Development and Regeneration	1 Sports Development 5 Community and Culture 6 Economic Development and Regeneration

Non-front line services	Ballymoney Civic Headquarters	Ballycastle Civic Headquarters	Coleraine Civic Headquarters	Limavady Civic Headquarters
			15 Business Support	
Total Staff	77	16	185	41
Hot desk arrangement	3 Hot desks	3 Hot desks	3 Hot desks	3 Hot desks