

Herefordshire Council

Corporate Property Strategy 2016 2020

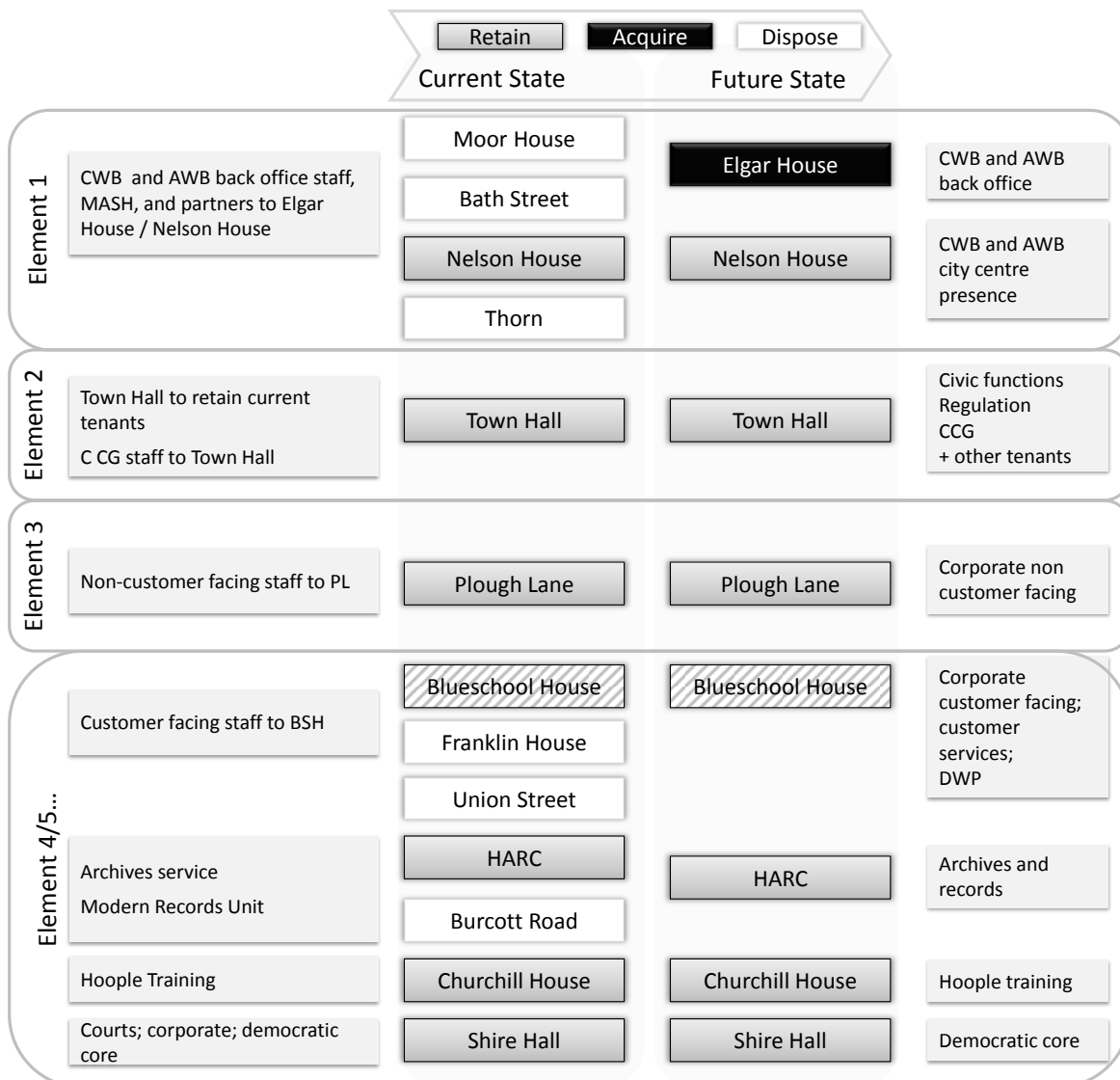
APPENDIX 1A CORPORATE PROPERTY PROGRAMME 2016 2020

PROPERTY STRATEGY 2016-2020

1. The new property strategy will build on the success of the 2013-2016 strategy. The previous accommodation strategy aimed to re-shape the operational estate to take account of future service demand pressures and the need to reduce the cost of the back office function.
2. The revised property strategy for the period 2016 to 2020 includes the following objectives:
 - a. To improve and simplify access to public services
 - b. To enable service integration and agile working with modern, fit for purpose workspaces supporting higher productivity
 - c. To maximise the economic benefits of the councils property asset base
 - d. To support economic development and housing growth
 - e. To enhance the working environment for our employees and our partners' staff.
 - f. To provide a catalyst for physical and social regeneration.
 - g. To reduce running costs and release budget for reinvestment in frontline services.
3. These objectives have been used to guide the development of a proposed programme of rationalisation of the operational estate. This will provide modern, fit for purpose workspaces supporting higher productivity and reducing running costs. This programme will address specific issues and opportunities including:
 - a. While significant improvements have been made to the council's operational estate in the last three years, significant challenges still remain. In particular the accommodation provided for children's wellbeing – Moor House and Bath Street – is no longer considered to be suitable, with an urgent need to replace the properties occupied by CWB operational services.
 - b. The new Hereford University have identified Franklin House as their preferred site for the initial development of a city centre campus offer. If the council can agree terms with the University, this site could realise the University's ambition for an anchor city centre presence before the end of the decade.

- c. There is an opportunity to co-locate DWP staff with the council's staff who have the most contact with service users, potentially in Blueschool House. Any such project will be supported by a financial business case that will demonstrate the benefits to the council of Blueschool House or another site.
 - d. Given the additional capacity provided by Elgar House, the council will be able to withdraw from Union Street. Staff will be moved to the corporate administrative centre or co-located with their client teams as appropriate.
 - e. Relocation of the MRU to the HARC to take advantage and improve utilisation of the newly provided facility.
4. This proposed programme of rationalisation would result in a reduction in the operational estate. The diagram below shows the current and proposed future state.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME



5. The implementation programme will be delivered in phases. This phasing is required to allow facilities to be vacated and prepared for the incoming teams. It also allows the services to manage the service delivery risks that arise from moving staff. The programme phases are:
- a. Element 1 – Elgar House acquisition – to provide additional capacity for CWB and AWB back office staff across Elgar House and Nelson House; a new location for the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) which is currently located in Bath Street, and enable element 2:
 - b. Element 2 – Town Hall (No. 8 St Owens Street) – the Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will move from Plough Lane to occupy the whole of No. 8 St Owens Street premises, which will enable element 3:
 - c. Element 3 – Plough Lane Review – a number of the council’s corporate staff will be moved to Plough Lane. This facility allows limited access for service users by appointment and is the home of the executive. The space made available in Plough Lane will be allocated to the most appropriate teams.
 - d. Element 4 – Blueschool House – the space vacated in Plough Lane as a result of the CCG move will allow the majority of the non-front facing services at Blueschool House to be relocated to Plough Lane. An option, at this point, will be to develop Blueschool House as a joint facility with DWP focused on customer facing services, but the option to dispose of Blueschool House also remains.
 - e. Element 5 – Franklin House – the new Hereford University have identified this as their preferred site for the initial development of a city centre campus offer. Consequent upon the other elements being delivered and the council agreeing terms with the University, this site could realise the University’s ambition for an anchor city centre presence before the end of the decade.
6. The programme will be phased. The timetable will be driven by a number of factors including: the dependencies between elements, the organisation’s capacity to deliver, and the financial case for each element. An indicative timetable for the first two years of the programme is included below.

ID	Task Name	Finish	2016				2017			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	Element 1 – Elgar House	17/11/2016	[Blue bar spanning Q1-Q4 2016]							
2	Element 2 – Town Hall	17/02/2017					[Blue bar spanning Q1-Q2 2017]			
3	Element 3 – Plough Lane	18/08/2017					[Blue bar spanning Q2-Q4 2017]			
4	Element 4 – Blueschool House	18/08/2017					[Blue bar spanning Q2-Q4 2017]			
5	Element 5 – Franklin House	18/01/2018					[Blue bar spanning Q1-Q4 2018]			

7. Each project within the programme will be subject to the development of a business case, including a financial case, demonstrating the benefits to the council and its service users.

Proposed moves will be subject to discussion and consultation with directorates and the affected staff.

8. The capacity provided by the rationalised operational estate assumes improved utilisation and desk to staff ratios as compared with the current situation. The current inefficiencies are driven partly by a number of properties that do not support modern, efficient ways of working; partly by the slow take up of better ways of working; and also by the lack of appropriate technology (such as electronic records management). There is, however, evidence of cultural change, in particular at Plough Lane, but this is still not fully reflected in desk utilisation.
9. In order to drive the improved efficiency that is assumed in the property strategy, the relocation of staff and refurbishment of accommodation must be accompanied by new support for changed working practices, as was done through BWOW, and a commitment by service management to support staff through the change.