

Committee(s): Civic Affairs Sub Committee – For Decision	Date: 18/07/2022
Subject: Member Workspace Requirements	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	4,5,7,8,9,10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y
If so, how much?	£10k
What is the source of Funding?	Civic Affairs contingency
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Y
Report of: Town Clerk and City Surveyor	For Decision
Report author: Greg Moore, Dorian Price	

Summary

At the May meeting of Civic Affairs Sub Committee, Members discussed the increasing demands placed upon senior chairs, reflecting that there was a growing commensurate need to have suitable resources and facilities available to them in support of their roles. In response to Member comments on the need for dedicated quiet space in which they could conduct their City Corporation business, the City Surveyor suggested there were a number of areas within the Guildhall Complex that had been identified, viz:-

- 65 Basinghall St
- Irish Chambers
- West Wing (WW) 3rd Floor – x3 offices within the Human Resources department
- WW Mezzanine
- WW 2nd Floor (reconfigure Chairman’s Rooms plus waiting space)
- Elements of 20/21 Aldermanbury

The Sub-Committee was minded that provision in the West Wing Mezzanine would be preferable, with office space to be made available for the agreed list of senior Chairs and the Deputy Chairman of Policy & Resources.

The Town Clerk and City Surveyor were asked to identify prospective options for the provision of Members facilities to the West Wing Mezzanine space, with a particular steer towards including a "de minimis" cost option (£10k), which also offered the quickest solution in terms of delivery and move into the existing space (floorplan attached, Appendix 1). However, during review of these options, an issue unknown at the time has been identified in that the occupying department, Innovation and Growth (IG), had intended to intensify use of this Mezzanine space to house the new Destination City team.

Notwithstanding this, IG have offered to release three under-utilised offices on the western side of the Mezzanine immediately, to allow for this space to be used by Members immediately. However, further work will be necessary in respect of the future of the eastern part of the floor, where additional consideration is necessary as to the potential use of that area for two further Member offices and, allied to this, alternative arrangements for housing IG staff will need to be presented to a future meeting of the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee.

This report, therefore, sets out proposals for the utilisation of three offices on the Mezzanine for senior Members and requests the allocation of £10k to facilitate this.

Recommendations

Members of Civic Affairs Sub Committee are asked to:

1. Approve Option 1 set out in the report, i.e. the utilisation of an initial three offices on the Mezzanine for allocation to Senior Members at de minimis cost.
2. Approve funding of £10k from the Civic Affairs contingency pot to resource the necessary move works, including minor refurbishment and decoration and other associated costs.
3. To provide views in respect of the eastern part of the Mezzanine and two remaining required offices, which will be subject to future reporting.

Main Report

Background

1. At the May 2022 meeting of Civic Affairs Sub Committee, Members discussed the increasing demands placed upon senior Chairs, reflecting that there was a growing commensurate need to have suitable resources and facilities available to them in support of their roles. In particular, the Sub-Committee agreed that additional resources (in the form of dedicated office space) should be made available to:-
 - The Chairman of the Finance Committee,
 - The Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee,
 - The Chairman of the Police Authority Board,
 - The Chairman of the Corporate Services Committee, and
 - The Deputy Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee.
2. The City Surveyor, having been asked by the Chair of the Sub-Committee to present options for available space, provided Members with a list of prospective areas.
3. The Sub-Committee was mindful of the need to keep costs to a minimum and noted that the Mezzanine level option presented included several existing under-utilised offices. The Sub-Committee consequently identified that space as the

preferred option and asked for the City Surveyor and Town Clerk to identify options for the use of this space, for further consideration.

Current Position

4. Town Clerk and City Surveyor have now provided prospective options for provision of Members facilities to the West Wing Mezzanine space, including a "de minimis" cost option (£10k). This is set out at Appendix 1.
5. However, during review of these options, an issue unknown at the time of the last meeting has been identified. The Surveyor has been made aware that the occupying department, Innovation and Growth (IG), had intended to intensify use of this Mezzanine space with the new Destination City team being appointed.
6. Full use of the space for Members' offices will, therefore, require this new team to be relocated elsewhere within the Guildhall complex. Depending on the specific location and requirements, this may invoke additional consequential costs which will require separate consideration by the Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee.
7. For instance, one potential option would be to move specific teams within IG across to the newly-vacated space in 65a Basinghall Street (which was previously the site of the Covid-19 testing centre – see Appendix 2). However, as this space is not currently allocated to IG, the approval of the Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee would need to be sought, given the loss of a potential external letting opportunity (estimated at £90k) and use of the space to satisfy this internal requirement. Other options would include looking at other available space within Guildhall which might be able to be repurposed.
8. Setting the above to one side, IG have confirmed that they are content to release three under-utilised offices on the west side of the Mezzanine floor, given the needs of Members, and these can therefore be made available immediately. It would, therefore, seem prudent to proceed with the repurposing of these rooms, given it provides the ability to put three of the required five offices into use quickly and at minimal cost.
9. Should Members be content to proceed on this basis, consideration as to the remainder of the Mezzanine level space (and the two additional offices which would be made available should the space be cleared) would then be subject to a further options report.
10. For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that the remainder of the Mezzanine space is occupied by staff from Guildhall Library and the Small Business Research and Enterprise Centre, who would both still require access to Lift 24, the book lift and toilets (see floorplan, Appendix 1).

Options and Proposal

11. Assuming that Members are happy to proceed with the use of the three offices on the west side of the Mezzanine for the time being, three options present themselves:-

- **Option 1: De Minimis Cost (Move in only – use of existing space).** This option is in keeping with the steer provided by Members at your last meeting and incorporates solely resource costs to move desks and prepare for office occupation. For instance, there would be no power sources moved, new partition walls installed, or similar – simply a repurposing of existing space. It would be intended that existing City Corporation furniture and furnishings would be utilised to keep costs low. The estimated cost for the entire floor would be £10k or, for just the three available offices now, £6k. It should be noted that this cost does not include the purchase or installation of AV equipment to allow for non-laptop based Teams meetings (this equipment and cabling costs are estimated at £5.5k per unit).
- **Option 2: Minimal Cost.** This option would include the redecoration of all offices, relocation of power sources, an upgrade to lighting, and new furniture. Estimated cost £60k to 80k (for the full Mezzanine).
- **Option 3. Full Refurbishment.** This would incorporate the complete refurbishment of the Mezzanine, including an asbestos survey, installation / removal of partitions and doors, new carpet tiles, redecoration works, upgrade of lighting, new blinds, toilets and kitchen refurbishments. Estimated cost £200k to £250k (for the full Mezzanine).

Proposal

12. In keeping with the views expressed by the Sub-Committee previously, Option 1 is recommended as being both the lowest cost and quickest solution to providing dedicated office space.

13. Current occupiers, IG and LMA have released 3 offices on the **west side** (Appendix 1 - labelled Finance Committee Chairman, Planning & Transport Committee Chairman and Deputy Chairman Policy & Resources Committee) and it is recommended that these be provided for use as soon as possible.

14. Remaining offices on **east side** (Appendix 1 - labelled Corporate Services Committee Chairman and Police Authority Board Chairman) will be the subject of a further report once options relating to the vacation of the IG team have been progressed.

Corporate & Strategic Implications –

Strategic implications – Provision of this office space to meet the increasing demands placed upon senior chairs aligns with the Corporate Property Asset Management Strategy 2020/25 through better utilisation to ensure a more efficient, effective and sustainable asset base.

Financial implications – The Civic Affairs Sub-Committee has a budget allocation of £60k available to it for contingency purposes, to resource projects or initiatives within its remit. It is proposed that £10k be allocated from this budget for these works, leaving a total of £50k for the Sub-Committee’s remaining activities this financial year.

Equalities implications – The proposals in this report will have no impact (positive or negative) on people protected by existing equality legislation – age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Conclusion

15. To meet the increasing demands placed upon senior chairs, the Town Clerk and City Surveyor have provided prospective options for provision of Members facilities to the West Wing Mezzanine space. Working collaboratively, officers have initiated release of three under-utilised offices on the western side of the Mezzanine immediately, to allow for this space to be used by Members now.

16. Full use of the space for Members’ offices will require the IG team to be relocated elsewhere within the Guildhall complex. Depending on the specific location and requirements, this may invoke additional consequential costs which will require separate consideration by the Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Members Workspace - West Wing Mezzanine Floorplan
- Appendix 2 – Innovation and Growth draft 65a Basinghall Floorplan