

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 27 AUGUST 2018

REPORT ON: OFFICE RELOCATION

REPORT BY: ASSESSOR

REPORT NO: TVJB 17-2018

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Joint Board on the current position with regard to the relocation of staff from the Dundee Divisional Office, Whitehall House, Dundee and the Forfar Divisional Office at Ravenswood House, Forfar to new premises at William Wallace House, Orchardbank, Forfar.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Joint Board is asked to note the content of the report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The revenue budget set for 2018/19 contains an assumed saving from property costs of £61,640. An additional one-off capital allocation of £75,000 was also made in respect of capital expenditure relating to the office re-location. Whilst a significant number of aspects of expenditure have still to be finalised, after taking account of an increased number of staff vacancies it is anticipated that relocation costs will be contained within the existing provision.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. It is noted that the office relocation will resolve outstanding equality issues with regard to disability access to Ravenswood House, Forfar. There are no other major issues.

5 BACKGROUND

5.1 The Joint Board agreed at the meeting of 19 January 2018 that option 4 of the available options should be adopted i.e. relocating both Angus and Dundee staff to a single office at William Wallace House, Forfar. The Joint Board instructed the Clerk and the Assessor to finalise and agree lease terms and to make arrangements for removals, refitting (including provision of an appropriate telephone system) and for the remediation of dilapidation works as required.

5.2 Lease terms were agreed with Angus Council for the Joint Board to take occupation of the first floor of William Wallace House. The lease is for a ten year period effective from 1 June 2018 or thereabouts with a break option in favour of the tenant at the end of year five. A joint referral was made requesting that the District Valuer ascertain the current market value of the premises and this has been agreed at £50,000 per annum. The lease is currently being finalised by solicitors from Dundee City Council (acting on behalf of the Joint Board) and solicitors representing Angus Council.

5.3 Relocation of Dundee Divisional Staff took place on 15 May 2018 and, after completion of alteration and redecoration work, Angus Divisional Staff relocated to the new premises on 18 July 2018. Overall the removals went relatively smoothly.

5.4 Following discussions with the Clerk to the Board and in view of the limited time available, arrangements were made for the installation of an appropriate telephone

system via the Boards current IT providers– Hutchinson Networks. Although time did not permit a tendering exercise to be undertaken the specification and cost of the system were vetted by Dundee City Council before the Clerk confirmed that on this occasion, under the approved tender procedures, a direct award could be made. The capital cost to install the telephone system was £45,104. The telephone system was installed on 15 - 18 May 2018 and became operational to Dundee Divisional staff within the new office at William Wallace House on Monday 21 May 2018. Reconfiguration work took place on 18 / 19 July to transition the Angus Divisional Staff to the new system. Further work is currently being scheduled to transition the Perth Divisional office to the new system during September / October 2018.

5.5 In relation to dilapidation works, following discussions with the City Development Department of Dundee City Council, it has been agreed that a cash settlement in lieu of undertaking dilapidation works should be sought. Negotiations as to the amount of the settlement are still ongoing.

5.6 It should be noted that a significant number of further costs associated with the relocation have still to be ascertained. This will include, for example, signage for William Wallace House, readdressing of stationary (including the redesign of numerous templates maintained by the Boards external electoral registration mail service provider), the provision of a PSN service to William Wallace House, the likely cost of service charges for the new building (including heating, electricity, cleaning and other services) and other related matters. Details of the final costs will be reported once these become available.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Clerk and the Treasurer to the Board have been consulted on this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

ALASTAIR KIRKWOOD
Assessor

August 2018