

WLGA TRANSITION & RECOVERY SUPPORT PROGRAMME – MASTERCLASS SERIES

Session 3 – “Buildings” Refurbishment of Crown Buildings

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History of Crown Buildings



- Built in 1960's
- Acquired by WCBC in 1997
- Formerly Job Centre



History of Crown Buildings



Previous Occupants included:

- **HTV Wales**
- **Wrexham Magistrates**
- **WCBC Housing and Economy and more recently Adult Social Care Staff**



Construction of Crown Buildings

- Concrete frame with precast concrete panels
- Single glazed windows
- Flat roof
- Large water storage tanks on roof
- Internally nearly all demountable partitioning
- Centralised plant room with gas boiler and basic heating system. This often led to complaints about the building being too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer
- General lack of investment over the years

Office Accommodation Review

The Council's office accommodation strategy was originally agreed in 2011.

The main driver at the time was a need to rationalise the accommodation to reduce revenue costs for rental and also to ensure that there was:

- improved space utilisation and better design of office accommodation
- a reduction in energy costs and carbon footprint of office accommodation
- the provision of flexible work spaces, to enable improved working practices
- a better use of accommodation for those teams whose functions were similar
- Improved communication between teams
- improved footfall in the town centre and create buildings with a clear identity and purpose
- the need to provide more modern and flexible office accommodation
- the opportunity to roll out 'agile' working wherever appropriate.

Office Accommodation Review

Phase One

- looked at putting teams and services into the right buildings
- this resulted in a reduction in the amount of money spent on leasing buildings/office space

Phase Two

- looked at the way we use our office accommodation, the aim was to introduce more flexible ways of work to support agile working
- this resulted in a further reduction in the amount of office space required
- identified opportunities to consolidate the buildings we occupy even further through subsequent phases of OAR.

Office Accommodation Review

Phase 3

- Phases one and two had resulted in some smaller scale relocation and improvement works but phase three was much more ambitious and proposed a wholesale refurbishment of Crown Buildings

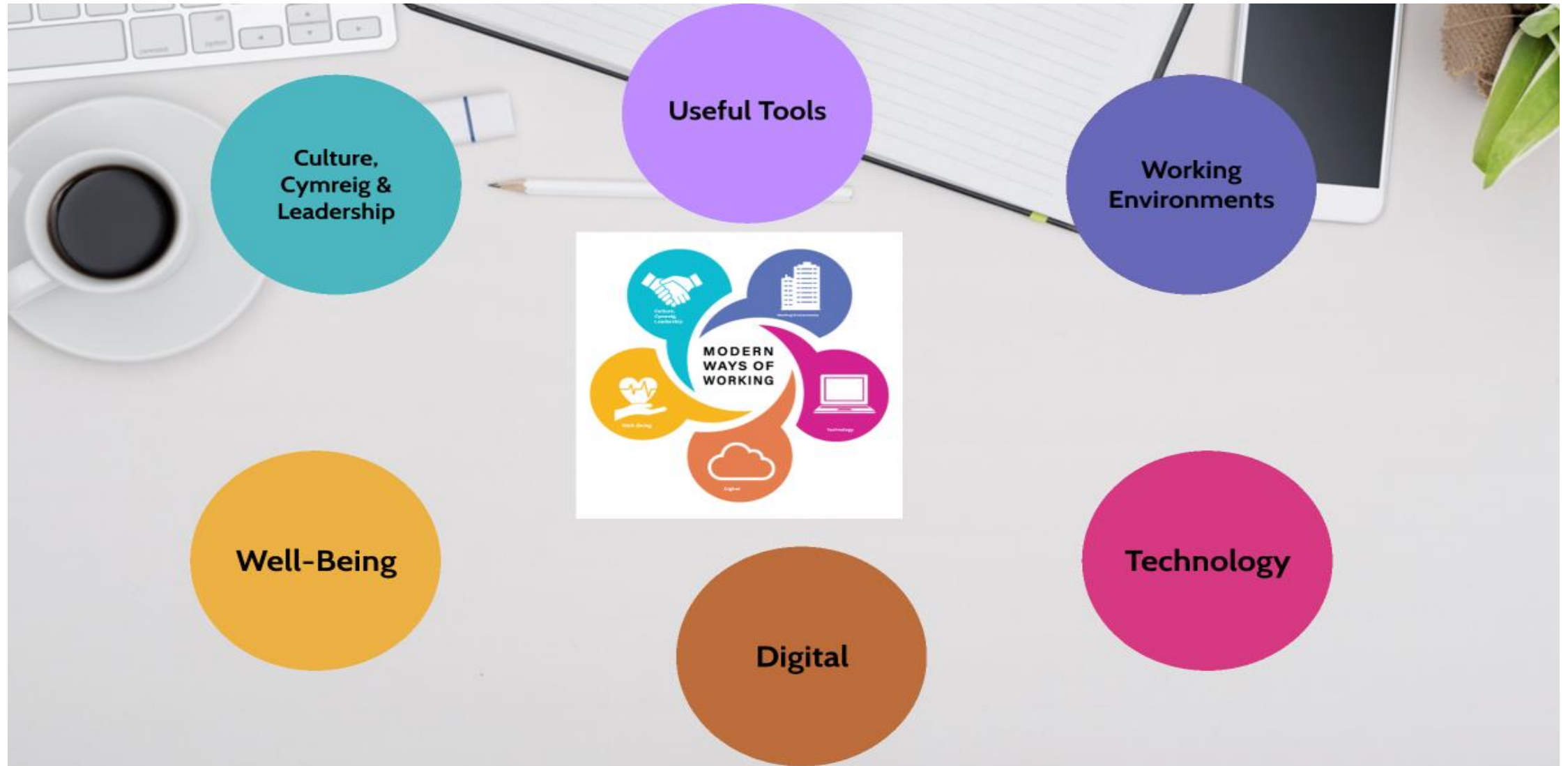
Phases 4 and 5

- Subject to appropriate funding, the next phases will be the other main operational offices to bring them up to a similar standard

Modern Ways of Working Programme (MWOW)

- The main objective's are ensure we are as efficient as we can be, to keep pace with changes in society and the expectations of our customers, and to offer enabling and flexible working environments and technologies for staff
- To achieve this the Council adopted this programme of change and named it 'Modern Ways of Working'
- The 'Modern Ways of Working' Programme looks to transform our working practices by providing improved working environments, adopting new technology and digital solutions, making our work more sustainable in the long term and challenging the culture around the way in which the Council operates
- The programme aims to bring a range of benefits to the Council and its employees, as well as wider social and environmental benefits.

The Modern Ways of Working programme is being carried out under the five themes of...



Modern Ways of Working (MWOW)

- The pandemic necessitated a re-think of the way we work, challenging assumptions of traditional ways of working and bringing forth new approaches to management, teamwork and interaction with customers and the wider public
- this resulted in the acceleration of the Modern Ways of Working programme
- we want to build on this and as we gradually work towards our 'new normal', as restrictions ease. We hope to achieve a balance of working in a more modern 'hybrid' approach that contains a mixture working from home, on site and in the workplace.

Modern Ways of Working (MWOW)

- As we continue to embrace and develop MWOW, the requirement for opening up its buildings, providing breakout space, new furniture, upgrading our ICT infrastructure and having access to hybrid meeting rooms are now essential to the way we want staff to work and improve on the previous work/life balance
- the variety of workspaces and furniture options within Crown Buildings are designed to suit the needs of the teams working from there, with a principle that space is allocated to activities rather than individuals.
- the types of workspaces include breakout areas for collaborative working, pods for 1-1s or small group discussions and quiet space, desks with monitors for longer periods of desk work, meeting rooms with up to date video conferencing capabilities and staff recreation space.

Office Accommodation Crown Buildings

- In January 2020, approval was granted to progress with Phase 3 in order to address the long term future of Crown Buildings. The capital funding was supplemented by a grant from Integrated Care Fund (ICF). Without this additional funding it is unlikely that we would have been able to undertake all of the works required to such a high standard
- the original intention was that the building will provide a modern, flexible workspace for approximately 300 employees at any one time, but because of the new flexible working arrangements, will be the “home base” for over 600 staff. It will also accommodate staff from partner organisations through the provision of the ‘Wellbeing Hub’
- the intention is that Crown Buildings will become the main base for Social Care and Education staff and be one of our flagship facilities in the town centre. It will also incorporate a ‘Wellbeing Hub’ on the ground floor.

The Well Being Hub

- The Wellbeing Hub is a new multi-agency space that provides integrated community, health, social care and third sector preventative activities. It will also provide for alternative solutions to care and support in a safe environment, with accessible facilities, for all ages and abilities.
- it compliments existing service provision, covering physical health, mental health and wellbeing.
- it will be run in a co-productive way with a mix of paid staff from different organisations, sectors and volunteers to create a strengths-based 'community asset', under the direction of a multi-agency Steering Group comprising representatives from BCUHB, WCBC and AVOW.

Well Being Hub Facilities

- 1 Large community room with accessible kitchen – has access to enclosed children's play area and can be divided into two smaller rooms – capacity approx. 52 or 26 people in each divided room
- 1 Medium community room with accessible kitchen – capacity approx. 16 people
- 2 Small meetings rooms – capacity approx. 4 people
- 1 Clinic room – with sink – capacity approx. 2/3 people
- 1 Sensory room
- 3 Changing Places fully accessible toilet facilities
- Eatery/ Café area with soft play
- Self service areas/ desks / meeting areas
- Informal meeting areas/ pods
- Reception



Refurbishment of Crown Buildings - The Brief

- The brief required the remodelling and refurbishment of the building to meet the Councils current and future needs, whilst incorporating much needed improvement in the buildings environmental performance.
- The Display Energy Certificate (DEC) for the building before refurbishment was a 'D' rating.
- The design of the building to improve the buildings energy performance was a key driver for the scheme from the outset.
- Read Construction, and its designers have focussed on a “fabric first” approach to improve the overall thermal efficiency of the building envelope to reduce carbon emissions.

Now Over to Alex Read to continue the journey and reveal the transformation of the building

