

**21 February 2019**

## **Public invited to view council plans for new HQ**

Cambridgeshire County Council is inviting residents to view and comment on plans for its new Headquarters in Alconbury Weald, prior to the submission of a formal planning application

Designs will be shared on the Council's website, and members of the public also invited to attend an Information Event in Alconbury Weald on Thursday, 28 February.

A decision taken by Full Council in May 2018 set the wheels in motion for the Council to move from its costly six acre Shire Hall site in central Cambridge, and move to a smaller, more flexible purpose built building in Alconbury Weald.

The new two-storey headquarters, which aims to be 'bright, efficient and flexible' will incorporate a private wing for staff housing around 350 desks, and a public reception area with informal meeting space.

Council and Committee meetings are set to be held in a multi-use 90 seater space, which can be split into 3 rooms, and offering potential for future community use.

Even after taking the cost of the new building into account, the move is set to save the Council in the region of £46.5m over the next 30 years, savings which will be reinvested back into public facing services.

Planning permission will be submitted in late spring, with construction set to begin towards the end of 2019, and completion due by December 2020.

"Throughout the last year we have carried out extensive engagement with officers, councillors and local community groups to shape the plans that we are sharing with the wider county residents today," said Cllr Joshua Schumann, Chair of the Council's Commercial and Investment Committee. "These conversations have been invaluable, and by working alongside special interest groups such as our Equality & Diversity Group, I believe we will be able to create an efficient, flexible and collaborative space that truly works for staff, councillors and the public alike.

"The County Council has a long-standing association with Shire Hall, but with running costs in the region of £900,000 per year just to maintain the site, we must face facts and look at ways of investing money back into essential services", he added.

“The building of the new and smaller HQ is part of a much wider plan to base ourselves closer to our communities, and make better use of our own assets and those of partners across Cambridgeshire,” said Chris Malyon, Deputy CEX and Chief Finance officer. “The Council will always retain a presence in Cambridge city, but will now be more visible in other areas across the county too”.

#### **Find out more**

- **A Public Engagement event** will be held between 4pm- 8pm on Thursday, 28 February, at The Club Building, Alconbury Weald, PE28 4XA. Representatives from the Council and the design and build team will be on hand to talk through the designs and answer any questions. This event is an opportunity to showcase some main principles of the new Hub but many of the detailed design elements are still being considered. We will continue to work with stakeholders in order to create a building which meets our present and future needs
- Following this, the designs will be on display in Shire Hall from 1 - 13 March.
- You can also view designs today via the County Council website(<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/public-invited-to-view-council-plans-for-new-hq/>) and comments can be submitted using the email address provided

**ENDS**