

Item: 12

Title: Neath Port Talbot & Swansea region office accommodation

Gweithredu / Action required	For consideration and approval by Board
Amseru / Timing	Urgent
Argymhelliad / Recommendation	The Board is asked to approve, in principle, a move of the Neath Port Talbot & Swansea region from Cimla to Baglan Bay Innovation Centre.
Risg / Risk	Reputational and financial risk
Cyllid / Finance	Budgetary impact to support move
Amcan Cynllun Corfforaethol / Corporate Plan Objective	To grow and improve as an organisation
Ecwiti, Amrywiaeth a Chynhwysiant / Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	The office move will have a full integrated impact assessment, to ensure it meets all accessibility requirements.
Cyfathrebu / Communications	Please tick one of the following boxes if this activity will have an impact on: Internal: our people <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External: our customers/partners/stakeholders <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External: our organisation's reputation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cymeradwyaeth / Approval/Clearance	Joanne Bolton
Trafodaethau/ Penderfyniadau Blaenorol / Previous discussions/decisions	The Board has received reports in previous meetings discussing a number of office moves at different regions, including the need to move the Neath Port Talbot and Swansea region's staff to new premises.
Awdur/ Cyflwyno / Author/presenting	Angela Mutlow
Dyddiad / Date	21 May 2025

Cefndir / Background

Llais' Neath, Port Talbot, and Swansea region currently leases office space at Cimla Hospital, Neath Port Talbot. The most recent lease, a 3-year agreement with Swansea Bay University Health Board, expired on March 31, 2025 (there is no security of tenure).

Subsequently, the Health Board has requested that Llais vacate the premises by 30 June 2025. Assuming that provisional approval is provided by Llais' Board to this business case officers within the NHS Estates department will be contacted to request a further extension to 30 September 2025.

Despite exploring various alternative accommodation options, none have met the team's requirements in terms of location, accessibility, or proximity to public transport. Given that Llais is publicly funded, the Executive and Board prefer relocating to an existing public sector building rather than entering a commercial lease.

Manylion / Detail

Proposed accommodation: Baglan Bay Innovation Centre

Baglan Bay Innovation Centre (BBIC), owned by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, offers several suites that align with Llais' operational needs. Following a site visit, the team has identified 2 options:

- Option A - Suites 32 and 33 (1,690 sq.ft) or
- Option B - Suites 29,30 and 33 (1,894 sq.ft)

While Option A is slightly smaller than the current 1,848 sq. ft. used at Cimla, the reduced size is offset by the inclusion of an onsite Boardroom in BBIC, eliminating the need for additional leased space. The options identified will provide the organisation with ample space and provide the opportunity for potential growth within the team.

Key features of the innovation centre include:

- Compliance: Disability Discrimination Act compliant.

- **Accessibility:** Excellent public transport links and proximity to the current location (approximately a 15-minute drive).
- **Security:** Staffed secure entry system with swipe card access.
- **Facilities:** Ample onsite parking, including electric vehicle charging points.
- **Additional amenities:** Access to an equipped onsite Boardroom, reducing the need for additional leased space.

Appendix A includes a site floor plan demonstrating the size and shape of suites.

Office layout and design

To ensure optimal use of the available space, Llais will collaborate with an office designer to develop an initial layout that includes:

- **Desk areas:** Banks of desks to accommodate the team.
- **Storage solutions:** Dedicated spaces for promotional materials.
- **Breakout zones:** Areas designed for informal conversations and collaborative work.
- **Private offices:** 1 or 2 offices, each capable of seating up to 4 people, suitable for client meetings, private calls, or team meetings.

Lease terms on offer

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council has proposed flexible lease terms for Llais. This move is being seen as a long-term option for Llais and the proposed lease term within the draft heads of terms is for a 5-year lease, with the option to terminate the lease at 3 years.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council has offered Llais a 50% service charge and rental reduction for the first 4 months of the term of the lease, which equates to a reduction of £5,500 incl VAT.

Finance

The table below provides a breakdown of the annual costs of the current versus the proposed options and include VAT, but excluding the 50% reduction noted above.

	Units	Size (sq ft.)	Rent (£)	Service Charge (£)	Rates (£)	Insurance (£)	Electricity (£)	Internet (£)	Total (£)	Est cost per sq. ft (£) incl VAT
Cimla	N/A	1,848	36,641	0	9,270	0	0	607	46,518	25.17
BBIC										
Option A	32	915	10,980	7,137	4,942	363	4,000	607	28,029	
	33	775	9,300	6,045	4,203	363	0	0	19,911	
		1,690							47,940	28.37
Option B	29	592	7,104	4,618	3,181	363	4,000	607	19,872	
	30	527	6,324	4,111	2,954	363	0	0	13,751	
	33	775	9,300	6,045	4,203	363	0	0	19,911	
		1,894							53,535	28.27

The overall cost of each of the proposed options is higher than current accommodation costs in Cimla. The facilities in the proposed new accommodation represents a significant improvement over those at Cimla Hospital.

It is estimated that Option A will incur an additional cost of £1,400 compared to current costs, whereas Option B will result in an increase of £5,500. Notably, Option B would provide Llais with the added benefit of having its own dedicated Boardroom.

It is requested that the Board delegates authority to the Executive Team to make the final decision between the 2o options. The decision will be based on ensuring the most effective use of the space and delivering best value for money for the organisation.

Relocation costs

It is estimated that relocation costs could be £12,500, which encompasses office designer fees, removal costs, waste disposal, solicitor's fees and IT relocation costs. An additional £10,000 is estimated to be required to furnish the office with desks and storage. The current furniture, inherited from the Community Health Council, is over twenty years old and is no longer fit for purpose. There is sufficient contingency budget available to fund these relocation costs.

Depending upon the results of the work with the office designer, it may also be necessary for a small amount of construction work to be

undertaken to build partition walls. Any budgetary impact will be considered by the Executive Team prior to starting any work.

Dilapidation costs

Llais' Annual Report and Accounts include a provision of £21,000, for dilapidations. An assessment conducted by NHS officers on May 8 indicates that the actual costs will be less than the provision, and negotiations are underway.

There is sufficient contingency budget available to fund these dilapidation costs.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to provisionally agree Llais' move into Baglan Bay Innovation Centre, subject to positive outcomes on the Integrated Impact Assessment, positive staff engagement and Trade Unions and provisional agreement of Heads of Terms.

This move aligns with Llais' operational needs and financial considerations, ensuring continued service delivery within the region.

Appendix A - Plan of Baglan Bay Innovation Centre.

Units 32 and 33 are under consideration for option A

Units 29,30 and 33 are under consideration for option B

