

Report Purpose:

Potential Office Relocation from Macclesfield Town Hall

Author:

Town Clerk

Current Situation

Since its formation in 2015, the Town Council has been based in offices rented within the CEC-owned Macclesfield Town Hall. What began as a single office has gradually expanded alongside the growth of the Council itself. Today, we occupy not only the main office but also a small boardroom and an additional storage room upstairs.

However, as the Council continues to develop, so too do the demands on space, staffing, and equipment. Our current accommodation is becoming increasingly restrictive. Access to the building is limited to Monday–Thursday, 8:00am–4:00pm, and Friday, 8:00am–3:30pm. Beyond these hours, entry requires the presence of a BSO, with a minimum two-hour charge—an arrangement that is both costly and inflexible.

In addition, unreliable internet connectivity hampers staff efficiency and undermines the smooth delivery of services. Coupled with the physical limitations of the space available, it is clear that the Town Hall is no longer fully meeting the needs of a growing and modernising Town Council. Moving will require giving a potential notice period on our current office.

Alternative Locations Considered

Several buildings have been looked at and 4 were chosen to be visited as they could be suitable.

Over leaf is a chart of comparison between the alternative locations. The names have been redacted for commercial sensitivity:

Scores

Excellent	4
Good	3
Satisfactory	2
Poor	1

Criteria	Premises 1	Premises 2	Premises 3	Premises 4	Premises 5
Location in the Town Centre	4	4	4	1	4
Proximity to Market Place (Suitable for Public Events)	4	4	4	1	1
Public Access	3	4	4	2	3
Disabled Access	3	4	4	3	3
Parking Availability	1	4	4	3	4
Internal Space	1	3	4	4	4
Committee Meeting Facilities	3	1	3	4	4
Room for Future Expansion	1	2	4	4	4
Storage for Rangers	1	4	4	3	3
Security	2	1	1	3	3
Internal layout of the premises	2	1	1	3	4
In need of renovation/ ready to move in	3	2	1	3	4
Strong Room for Artefacts	N/A	4	4	2	2
Scores	28	38	42	36	43

Costs	Premises 1	Premises 2	Premises 3	Premises 4	Premises 5
Cost of Acquisition/Rent	£22,000	£27,000	£40-50,000	£30,000	£15,000
Business Rates amount	N/A	£21,082.75	£14,845.25	Waiting for Info	£9,945.15
Utility Costs	N	Y	Y	Service Charge/ waiting for info	Y

NB: Business rates are reviewed every 3 years; next review is 2026

Recommendation

Based on the scoring and financial comparison, Premises 5 represents the best overall option. It achieves the highest criteria score (43/52) while also offering the lowest acquisition cost (£15,000) and lowest business rates (£9,945.15). This combination provides strong facilities, and the most cost-effective outcome. Premises 3 also scores highly (42), but its significantly higher rent (£40–50,000) makes it less viable financially. This would mean giving six months notice on our current office.

The chosen premises offer a range of features that will support our ongoing work and future growth. With significantly more space available, the office can comfortably accommodate staff and provide room for daily operations, meetings, and collaborative work. The location also includes 24-hour access, providing flexibility for the Council and opportunity to hold committee meetings in this venue rather than paying extra for out-of-hours activities. Security features are in place to ensure a safe and secure environment for everyone using the space, including lone working. The building also offers practical amenities such as lift access and accessible toilets, helping to ensure the space is inclusive and welcoming.

However, one main consideration is storage for the events, which we will need close to Market Place. As part of this recommendation, we will also be securing additional storage near Market Place to house event equipment, making it easier to manage logistics and access materials when needed and we have worked with Cheshire East Council to secure a proposed lease for storage at the old police station, which would be logistically perfect. This will be at a cost of £166 per month, which would still make this option the most favorable and access would be easier as we would not need to book a BSO to let us in. Overall, the proposed facilities provide a strong base for Council work, now and into the future.

Proposal: To start the process and move to recommended premises:

- Giving 6 months notice on our current location.
- Licensing the Old Police Station for 3 (with possibility of extending).
- Renting the chosen premises for 3 years (with possibility of extending).