

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
26th January 2017**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rosemarie Harris, Portfolio Holder
for Property, Buildings and Housing**

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Huw Williams

In a Powys County Council news release, dated the 24th of November 2016, it was stated that, ‘the Council is considering buying Ladywell House, Newtown, as part of an overall strategy to reduce building ownership...’. This news release goes on to say, ‘buying Ladywell House is part of a long term strategy to reduce building ownership and reduce the number of buildings, in the area.’

As part of the business plan, specifically which other buildings have been identified and considered for disposal, ‘to reduce building ownership’? This purchase, according to the news release, will also enable the Council to, ‘reduce its revenue costs by vacating other buildings, with the potential of a substantial capital receipt from the future sale of some of the redundant buildings’? Are these unidentified ‘other’ buildings located in Newtown and/or further afield? Is the purchase of Ladywell House dependent on capital receipts from the sale of these ‘other buildings’, or, is this an aspirational and separate matter?

In answer to your question, at this early stage of the Council’s office rationalisation project no specific buildings have been identified for closure. However the Council does need to reduce its costs and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its use of its office accommodation. One way this can be achieved in the future is to identify properties that may be surplus to the Council’s needs, possibly because they are require modernisation but are beyond reasonable repair or perhaps because we no longer deliver our services in such a way that these locations are required. The purchase of Ladywell House is not directly dependent upon the receipt of capital from the sale of (as yet unidentified) properties.