

# Equality Impact Assessment

Name of project/proposal	T19 Office Accommodation Strategy Overview
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Department	Culture, Communities and Business Services
Date of Assessment	21 Jun 2017

## **Description of Service / Policy**

The provision of office accommodation for all HCC staff who work in HCC offices, or use them as a base for part of their working time. It excludes staff based in schools. Staff based exclusively in operational buildings (e.g. children's homes, nursing homes, depots) would also be unaffected. The office accommodation in scope for the strategy is comprised of Winchester HQ buildings (approximately 12, plus ancillary facilities such as storage), Area hub offices and smaller satellite offices (approximately 20 buildings in total)  
Geographical impact\* All Hampshire

## **Description of proposed change**

The T19 Office Accommodation strategy will result in the intensified use of office accommodation across the estate in order to realise savings of £1.3m by March 2019. A utilisation study was conducted across the office estate which evidences that many buildings are currently underutilised. The intention is to restore these buildings to efficient levels of occupation, at least in line with the levels intended when staff were originally moved into them as part of the Workstyle programme. Proposals may see the disposal of some buildings, with staff relocating to other offices or working in a more mobile way.

Staff impacts may include (i) staff working at higher staff:desk ratios than currently, especially where they have slipped over time as teams have reduced in size, (ii) staff being moved from their current office base to a different building or part of a building, (iii) changes in office environment such as different layouts of desks and furniture. Any changes will take into consideration special requirements such as accessibility.

## **Engagement and consultation**

Has engagement or consultation been carried out?      Yes

Engagement is ongoing: We are piloting intensification of use in different buildings and continue to review the findings to inform the developing strategy. We have engaged with all departments through their Transformation Leads and plan to meet with departmental representatives again in September. We will engage formally with DMTs in October. These discussions continue to help shape the development of our options and recommendations. All staff have had

the opportunity to provide feedback through a survey of drop in provision which will be used to consider the future role of drop in facilities to support the strategy.

No specific Hampshire wide consultation has been carried out on this proposal, however, the County Council carried out a major public consultation exercise over the Summer 2017 on a range of options for finding further budget savings including increasing council tax, using reserves and making changes to the way in which services are delivered, which may mean reducing or withdrawing certain services. The outcome of this consultation will be presented to Cabinet in September 2017.

When decisions are made to pursue the options, further specific Hampshire wide consultation will be carried out with stakeholders on the detailed options where required.

### ***Impacts of the proposed change***

This impact assessment covers HCC Staff (and partners)

#### **Statutory considerations**

Age

#### **Impact**

Neutral

Disability  
Impact

Low

Any relocation of staff may have particular implications for those who are disabled. For example, staff with a physical disability may require wheelchair access, or need to be based on the ground floor of a building if it doesn't have a lift. The needs of those with any nonphysical disability would also be considered, for example, some mental health conditions may be exacerbated by a more intense use of office space, hence the provision of break out spaces and smaller spaces for quiet working will remain important. Where staff with a disability may be unduly impacted by a change to their office accommodation, this will be managed and mitigated through the existing legal framework and corporate policy relating to the employer making reasonable adjustments in the workplace to meet the needs of disabled staff. This approach is already in place and has been used to good effect throughout previous phases of the Workstyle programme. We will continue

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	to follow the current property services access policy which is designed to address the needs of staff with a disability.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Race	Neutral
Religion and Belief	Neutral
Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Gender	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral

## Other policy considerations

Poverty	Neutral
Rurality	Low If an office building is closed staff living in rural locations may need to travel further to reach their designated office base.
Mitigation	This would be managed through the existing HR policy relating to a change of designated work base. We are reviewing the drop in strategy, which may result in different HCC locations becoming available for staff to use as drop in. In addition, the Enabling Productivity project is intending to roll out mobile devices to a significant proportion of the workforce, enabling staff to work more flexibly across a range of work settings rather than tethering them to a designated office base. It should be noted that staff already have access to request flexible working through the existing corporate flexible working policy.

## **Additional Information**

The Office Accommodation Strategy is intended to build on the learning from the Workstyle programme which has been successfully rolled out across the organisation since 2010, promoting the use of shared space and smarter flexible working.

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The strategy is also intended to complement the corporate Enabling Productivity project which seeks to increase staff productivity through the provision of technology (systems and devices) that facilitates a move to more flexible and mobile working as a means to achieve a more agile, effective and efficient workforce.