



OFFICE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE REVIEW PANEL

CONTENTS

Section 1	Summary of Key Findings, the future shape of office accommodation provision, and Member views on taking this forward.	Pages 3 - 8
Section 2	Remit of the panel and conduct of the review	Pages 9 - 11
Section 3	Key drivers for change	Pages 12 – 13
Section 4	Historic and current position in relation to office accommodation	Pages 14 - 16
Section 5	Outcome of consultation with staff	Pages 17 – 21

SECTION 1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, (THE FUTURE SHAPE OF OFFICE ACCOMMODATION PROVISION AND MEMBER COMMENTS ON MOVING THIS FORWARD).

Key Findings

The Panel having reviewed the existing office accommodation has found:-

- A large number of offices which are 'not fit for purpose' including some which were not DDA compliant;
- Buildings which are inefficient in their use of energy, water and other resources
- Wide variations in utilisation of office space, ranging from 5.7m²/FTE to 38m²/FTE;
- New ways of working resulting in the need for change;
- Some 1600 employees (out of 3060) spending 50% of their time out of the office;
- Some 7.5 million business miles were travelled to and from appointments.

The Panel has concluded that there is a clear case for reducing and rationalising the existing office accommodation portfolio coupled with a need to invest resources to improve and make better use of the remaining facilities.

Future Shape of Office Accommodation

The Panel has noted that the Strategy would be delivered over several years and as such these basic design principles would be kept under review and amended as appropriate to changing needs and circumstances. However the Panel believes that the following principles offer a good basis for the County Council's future Office Accommodation Strategy. The future model envisages:-

- a) A 'Hub and Spoke' design with County Hall as the Hub and office facilities (Spokes) in each of the major market towns and other key centres (this will involve some rationalisation of the existing portfolio particularly in relation to those offices deemed 'not fit for purpose');
- b) A varied provision including:-
 - Fixed workstations
 - Hot-desking
 - Touch-down facilities and home working;
- c) Good modern and flexible accommodation which, in the main, will be 'Open-Plan' with break-out areas, meeting rooms and areas for concentrated and confidential work;
- d) Accommodation which is of good quality and environmentally friendly in terms of energy and water usage (this may mean retro-fitting a number of existing buildings);
- e) An improved and centralised Facilities Management function to ensure that the accommodation, particularly touch-down points, are properly serviced;
- f) Reduced storage with greater focus on electronic storage and off site storage of older paper records where necessary (this aspect would warrant a separate review).

Examples of existing accommodation deemed fit for purpose:



The benefits of improved Office Accommodation

The Panel concluded that there were clear benefits from an improved office environment, specifically:-

- More efficient use of space resulting in a reduction of the office accommodation portfolio and a consequent reduction in accommodation costs;
- Improved customer focus through better accessibility (both physical and signage) for the public and staff;
- Greater energy efficiency and sustainability;
- Better management of work/life balance which in turn would aid recruitment and retention of staff;

- Offices which reflect the values of the Council, namely customer focused, working in partnership with others, value for money and an employer of choice;
- Reduction in mileage by greater use of local touch-down facilities.

Snibston Discovery Park touch-down point



Risks and Challenges in delivering the change

The Panel recognised that there were significant challenges ahead in delivering the changes necessary and that such changes were not necessarily buildings related. In particular Panel was of the view that:-

- a) The Office Accommodation Strategy should be based on a robust business case with clear criteria for assessing rate of return. The Panel nevertheless recognised that, in the short term, the Strategy may require additional upfront capital investment to achieve on-going savings;
- b) New working styles could bring benefits to the organisation but that to implement these would require a great deal of planning. New ways of working would not automatically result from new office accommodation and layout but would require a change in mindset and management practices. Key to this will be:-
 - i) support for managers to manage outcomes and outputs (i.e. effectiveness of workers in terms of delivery of services) as opposed to managing and monitoring staff in the office;

- ii) support for outreach workers to prevent such members of staff developing a sense of isolation;
 - iii) development of protocols relating to the use of touchdown facilities, hot-desking and records management (including greater use of electronic document management);
- c) There needed to be change in the culture of the organisation to one which worked across organisational and departmental boundaries as required by the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Office Accommodation Strategy could make a contribution by creating a working environment which supported interaction and collaboration between staff groups and partner organisations by careful planning of staff groupings within a particular building and co-location of staff from partner agencies. It is however recognised that negotiating appropriate arrangements with partners may take some time;
- d) Through a rigorous review of existing holdings in particular looking carefully at the need for retaining those building identified as 'Poor' in the condition survey and reinvesting in more appropriate building stock the Council could make significant reductions in its usage of energy and water and thereby reduce its carbon footprint.

Example of existing accommodation not deemed fit for purpose:



Involving Staff and the Public

One of the most significant risks to successfully delivering this Strategy is the attitude of staff and the public. The Panel is firmly of the view that time and effort spent in engaging with staff and the public to explain the changes and to obtain buy-in would be time well spent. This was the key lesson learnt by other authorities. The opportunities offered by the conversion of the former ESPO building into office accommodation on the new model should be exploited to the full. To that end the Panel would recommend that a clear communication and consultation plan is developed as the first stage of any Implementation Plan.

SECTION 2

REMIT OF THE PANEL AND CONDUCT OF THE REVIEW

Background and Context for the Review

The Project Mandate for an Office Accommodation Strategy includes the following:

“The Authority is undergoing a period of substantial change and service delivery transformation driven by the Change Programme, the Local Area Agreement, financial imperatives, major changes to frontline Council Services such as the integration and modernisation of services delivered by Adult Social Care, and major changes to support services, such as Shared Services. These new ways of working and delivering services are, in turn, changing future office requirements and levels of demand. It is essential to co-ordinate all these changing requirements, provide the strategic lead that is needed and develop a corporate office accommodation strategy that will identify, plan and provide the Council with the necessary offices whilst meeting with best value and affordability/requirements.”

Membership

The membership of the panel was Mrs J A Dickinson CC, Dr R K A Feltham CC (for 2 meetings), Mr J K C Legrys CC, Mr J S Moore CC, Mr E D Snartt CC (for 3 meetings) and Mr R M Wilson CC. Dr Feltham was appointed Chairman at the first meeting. After Dr Feltham was appointed to a Cabinet Support role and had to stand down from the Panel, Mrs Dickinson was appointed Chairman.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Review Panel were:

- i) review the Council's office portfolio and utilisation thereof (drawing upon baseline information refined and expanded since the review undertaken by GVA Grimley Property Consultants);
- ii) consider the options for delivering administration office services;
- iii) consider office presence, image and geographical spread;
- iv) consider issues in relation to type and quality of office accommodation;
- v) consider office work style practices and trends.

Conduct of the Review

The Panel met on 5 occasions between 29th April and 10th July 2008. The Panel:

- i) received the following presentations:
 - Reasons for developing an office strategy and the work already done analysing existing office stock, from the consultant on Asset Management based in Corporate Resources.
 - The Work Well Programme, from the Programme Manager for Mobile and Flexible Working.
- ii) took part in a workshop inviting their comments and views on a number of issues, as part of the consultation with key stakeholders.
- iii) Undertook site visits to:
 - a touch-down point based at Snibston Discovery Park;
 - Nottinghamshire County Council's offices at Lawn View House in Sutton in Ashfield.

iv) Received evidence from the following persons:-

- Elisabeth Carter, a consultant on Asset Management working with Leicestershire County Council
- Julian Haywood, Programme Manager for Mobile and Flexible Working, Corporate Resources
- Paul Love, Head of Commercial and Support Services, Community Services
- Sandy McMillan, Assistant Director Strategy and Performance, Adult Social Care Service
- Simon Nearney, Head of Strategic Human Resources, Corporate Resources
- Andy Roberts, Head of ICT, Corporate Resources
- Andrew Warrington, Group Manager, Northern Highways, Highways, Transportation and Waste Management.

Officer Support

The Panel was supported by:-

Steve Siddons, Head of Property Services and Asset Management, Corporate Resources

John Liddell, Business Partner, Corporate Resources

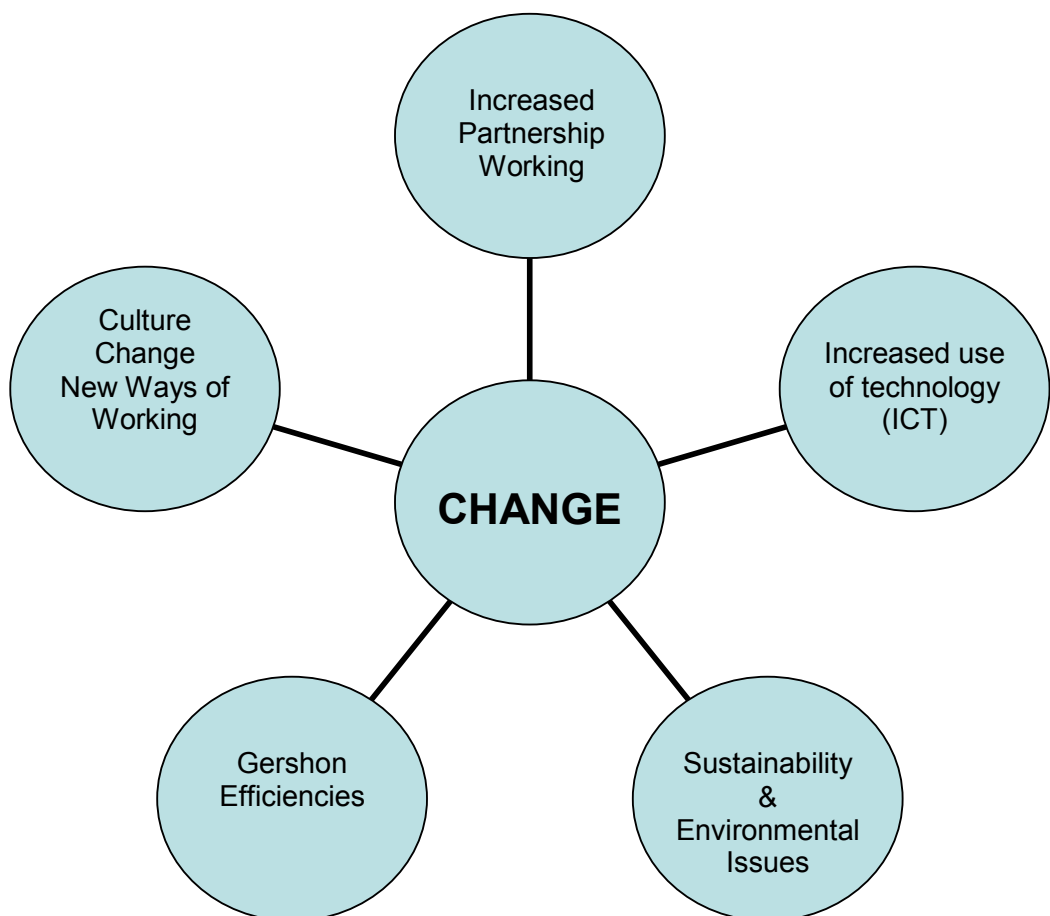
Beverley Ireland, Committee Officer, Chief Executive's Department

Mo Seedat, Committee Officer, Chief Executive's Department.

SECTION 3

KEY DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

A number of important issues are emerging which gives rise to the need for the County Council to now address the quality, management and delivery of office accommodation. Whilst there are number of drivers requiring change the Panel has identified the following as the principal drivers for change:



Partnership Working

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) increasingly require the County Council to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary sector partners to deliver services. Although LAAs have been in place since 2006 their importance has increased and this is likely to increase the pressure for co-location of staff.

Gershon Efficiency Savings

The County Council is required to make year-on-year efficiency savings to release money for frontline services and as such will need to explore opportunities for savings from all its assets including its property portfolio.

Cultural Change and New Ways of Working

The concept of work/life balance is becoming increasingly important to employees and the Council needs to respond to the greater desire for flexibility in working practices amongst its staff. The ability to offer extended opening hours at offices will enable a better service to be offered to members of the public as well as assist in making the Council an employer of choice.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues

The Government is setting ambitious environmental targets for public buildings. This is also in line with the Council's commitment to reduce its carbon footprint and to improve the efficiency of its building stock in terms of energy and water usage.

ICT

Recent improvements in ICT and telephony services offer greater opportunities for off-site working using touch-down points as appropriate and for holding virtual meetings making use of techniques such as video-conferencing.

The Panel has noted that the climate is right for undertaking such a review. A combination of changes in Human Resources legislation, in Information and Communications Technology and in work practices in Departments provides an opportunity to take forward a review of office accommodation with a view to producing an Office Accommodation Strategy for Leicestershire County Council.

SECTION 4

THE HISTORIC AND CURRENT POSITION IN RELATION TO OFFICE ACCOMMODATION;

The office portfolio for the County Council has developed in reaction to the individual needs of departments as those needs have arisen. This has resulted in a relatively large number of offices scattered across the County, often being serviced by the Department themselves. Increasingly, Heads of Department are reluctant to assume responsibility for the facilities management function of these buildings and are looking to hand responsibility for the fabric and maintenance of buildings over to the Property Services Section of Corporate Resources.

Following a review in 2006 the County Council made changes to the way in which its property assets were to be managed. A fully centralised corporate property function was established whose role was to ensure that the County Council's assets were used effectively to support its aims and objectives. Those structural changes which began in the middle of 2006 have now been fully implemented and the Council is now in a position to move forward on a number of issues including office accommodation.

The Panel noted that as a consequence of no overall corporate approach to the planning and acquisition of office accommodation the Council has an extremely varied portfolio. At present the County Council has 53 offices, in a mixture of freehold and leasehold. An analysis of the accommodation has highlighted wide variations in space utilisation (from 5.7m²/FTE to 38m²/FTE) and running costs (from £28 to £294 per m²).

The offices have been profiled based on utilisation, conditions, running costs and suitability and then coded using a traffic light system. There were 16 offices coded green (including County Hall); 23 offices were amber (indicating that some work was needed to bring them up to standard) and 14 offices were red (suggesting that the office accommodation in those buildings was largely unsuitable) (see below).

RESULTS OF SUITABILITY ASSESSMENTS

UPRN	PROPERTY	ADDRESS 1	ADDRESS 2	DISTRICT	TOTAL SCORE
2084	REGISTRARS OFFICE	REGISTRARS OFFICES	MELTON MOWBRAY	MELTON	32
577	COUNTY HALL COMPLEX	LEICESTER ROAD	GLENFIELD	BLABY	30
2093	RESOURCES AREA OFFICE	1 ROMULUS COURT	LEICESTER	LEICESTER	30
1938	CEDARS CENTRE	CEDAR AVENUE	WIGSTON	OADBY/WIGSTON	26
2143	UNIT 2 & 3	BRIDGE PARK PLAZA	THURMASTON	CHARNWOOD	26
3001	MENTAL HEALTH OFFICE	SHEPshed HEALTH CENTRE	SHEPshed	CHARNWOOD	26
99	THE MOUNT (PART)	LEICESTER ROAD	MELTON MOWBRAY	MELTON	24
1181	MOUNTSORREL NORTHERN HIGHWAYS OFFICES BLOCK D ONLY	HAWCLIFFE ROAD	MOUNTSORREL	CHARNWOOD	24
1355	COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE (PART LD ADMIN BASE)	COMET WAY	COALVILLE	NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE	24
1424	DIVISIONAL OFFICE	BASSETT STREET	SOUTH WIGSTON	OADBY/WIGSTON	24
1993	THURMASTON AREA OFFICE	Pt SUITE 4, BRIDGE BUSINESS PARK	THURMASTON	CHARNWOOD	22
2057	OEM BUILDING ED PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE	WHITEACRES	WHETSTONE	BLABY	22
2062	UNIT 14 THE COURT YARD	STENSON ROAD	COALVILLE	NW LEICESTERSHIRE	22
912	PENNINE HOUSE	2 LEMYNGTON STREET	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	20
1173	CROFT SOUTHERN HIGHWAYS OFFICES BLOCKS L AND T ONLY	ARBOR ROAD	CROFT	BLABY	20
2051	UNIT D, THE POINT	GRANITE WAY	MOUNTSORREL	CHARNWOOD	20
2000	ROTHLEY HOUSE	JACKSON STREET	COALVILLE	NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE	18
2021	QUORN HOUSE	JACKSON STREET	COALVILLE	N.W. LEICESTERSHIRE	18
2091	CENTRE FOR THE DEAF	135 WELFORD ROAD	LEICESTER	LEICESTER	18
1390	SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISIONAL OFFICE	3 HIGH STREET	COALVILLE	NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE	16
1917	LEICESTERSHIRE LIBRARY H.Q. - OFFICES	929/931 LOUGHBOROUGH ROAD	ROTHLEY	CHARNWOOD	16
648	MARKET HARBOROUGH HIGHWAYS OFFICE	ADAM & EVE STREET	MARKET HARBOROUGH	HARBOROUGH	14
910	AREA OFFICE	LEICESTER ROAD	MELTON MOWBRAY	MELTON	12
2034	UNIT 7 ARK BUSINESS CENTRE	GORDON ROAD	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	12
2083	1ST FLOOR OFFICES - (BRIDGES)	1ST FLOOR 16 LEICESTER ROAD	BLABY	BLABY	12
2152	CYPS Y & C ADMIN BASE	GRANGE RD	HUGGLESCOTE	NORTH WEST	12
1505	HOLLY HAYES	216 BIRSTALL ROAD	BIRSTALL	CHARNWOOD	10
2037	SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE	4-6 BROOK STREET	SYSTON	CHARNWOOD	10
675	HINCKLEY AREA OFFICE	27 UPPER BOND STREET	HINCKLEY	HINCKLEY	8
737	MARKET HARBOROUGH REGISTRARS OFFICE	42 COVENTRY ROAD	MARKET HARBOROUGH	HARBOROUGH	8
843	BROCKS HILL YOUTH ADMIN BASE	BROCKS HILL P.S.	OADBY	OADBY & WIGSTON	8
1324	BROOKLANDS AREA OFFICE	NORTHAMPTON ROAD	MARKET HARBOROUGH	HARBOROUGH	8
86	FAMILY STEPS - OFFICES	THE DRIVE	COUNTESTHORPE	BLABY	6

771	SPECIALIST TEACHING BLABY STOKES	STOKES PRIMARY SCHOOL	QUEENS ROAD	BLABY	6
788	ABE - TRAVELLERS PROJECT	LEICESTER ROAD	DESFORD	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH	6
962	COALVILLE BUSINESS CENTRE	GOLIATH ROAD / VULCAN WAY	COALVILLE	NORTH WEST	6
1221	DIVISIONAL OFFICE	2 GLADSTONE AVE	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	6
2054	UNIT 3A THE GATE HOUSE	JACKSON STREET	COALVILLE	NW LEICESTERSHI RE	6
2028	UNIT Q DRUG ACTION TEAM UNIT	UNIT Q TROON WAY BUSINESS CENTRE	LEICESTER	LEICESTER	6
734	COALVILLE REGISTRARS OFFICE	41 RAVENSTONE ROAD	COALVILLE	NORTH WEST	4
736	LOUGHBOROUGH REGISTRARS OFFICE	202 ASHBY ROAD	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	4
774	YOUTH AND COMMUNITY/ADULT EDUCATION OFFICE	66 KINGSWAY	BRAUNSTONE	BLABY	4
2133	FERNLEIGH HOUSE	PART GROUND FLOOR FERNLEIGH HOUSE MELTON ROAD	SYSTON	CHARNWOOD	4
3000	MENTAL HEALTH OFFICE	MANSION HOUSE	GLENFIELD	BLABY	4
739	HINCKLEY REGISTRARS OFFICE	25 MOUNT ROAD	HINCKLEY	HINCKLEY	2
1473	LOUGHBOROUGH STUDENT SUPPORT	STATION AVENUE	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	2
2038	FIRST FLOOR OFFICE	44B CHURCH GATE	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	2
2182	CANAL OFFICE	HIGH ST	MEASHAM	NORTH WEST	2
966	OFFICES 3,4 & 5 - STUDENT SUPPORT BASE	SPRINGBOARD CENTRE	COALVILLE	NORTH WEST	0
1244	CTSU ABINGTON HOUSE	STATION ROAD	WIGSTON	OADBY & WIGSTON	0
1296	LOUGHBOROUGH CORONERS OFFICE	34 WOODGATE	LOUGHBOROUGH	CHARNWOOD	0
1794	SS LOCAL OFFICE	GARDEN STREET	THURMASTON	CHARNWOOD	0
2139	ASC OFFICE	ST MARYS HOSPITAL	MELTON MOWBRAY	MELTON	0

KEY

EACH ASSET IS GIVEN A SCORE AGAINST EACH GROUPING WHERE

GOOD =	3
AVERAGE =	1
POOR =	-1

TOTAL FOR EACH ASSET
IS SCORED

GOOD =	20 to 36
AVERAGE =	5 to 19
POOR =	MINUS 12 to 4

Whilst the above provided a starting point for a review of property holdings and possible rationalisation of those identified as in poor condition, the Panel noted that in some cases the strategic location of such properties may require their retention. Further work is needed and this will be undertaken in the context of the emerging office accommodation design principles.

SECTION 4

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

The Panel noted that consultations had been carried out with groups of staff drawn from all levels of the organisation. The Panel is of the view that that these findings would be a useful basis for the development of an Office Accommodation Strategy. The following groups had taken part in those consultations:

- CMT (Change Management Team)
- Corporate Property Steering Group
- Office Accommodation Strategy Scrutiny Review Panel
- Social Care Accommodation Group (Adult Social Care Service and Children and Young People's Service)
- Key Change Project Leads for: Customer First; Shared Services; Work Well; Facilities Management.

The Panel also participated in a workshop where their comments and views were sought on a number of issues, as part of the consultation with key stakeholders. **The key points which emerged from the member workshop are highlighted in bold** in the overall consultation responses below. There was general agreement across all consultees for change and the key issues to be addressed within the Strategy.

1. LCC'S FUTURE APPROACH TOWARDS DELIVERING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE SERVICES

Generally, it is expected that administrative office services will be provided internally but there will be a growing trend towards **partnership arrangements. These will be with other public sector partners, such as the PCT, GP Health Centres, Police and other Local Authorities and, to a lesser degree, with service related private partners, such as Tarmac under the Highway alliance.** Over the medium to longer terms there is likely to be more **shared service delivery with adjoining County Councils** and the creation of separate 'centres of excellence' eg in support services such as HR, Payroll, ICT. This would lead to changes both in headcount of internal

office staff and future locations. It is conceivable that some County Council support services could be provided externally beyond the county boundaries.

Plans to move towards increasing employees' access to personal HR and financial services will contribute to a reduction in the staff and space currently occupied through providing these services centrally.

The planned consolidation and, in some instances, the re-location of groups of office workers through change projects such as Customer First and Shared Services will release current office space (mainly at County Hall), create new office needs with some in new locations, and lead to a reduction in total numbers in the medium to longer-terms.

The total headcount of office based staff providing adult and children's social care services (the largest and most significant group of mobile and flexible workers as well as locality based workers) is unlikely to reduce but changes in the functions, locations and ways of working will have substantial impacts on future office requirements.

The County Council is not proposing to follow a 'one stop' shop model providing joint customer facing service and contact points in shared facilities with other District Councils, but the existing Leicestershire Connect Service points in various District Council offices will remain at least for the short-term. Through the Customer First project, public access to County Council web-based information and contact points is to be expanded through better use of operational properties such as libraries and schools rather than through dedicated, locality based public-facing offices.

2. KEY OFFICE LOCATIONS FOR LCC ACROSS THE COUNTY

There will be a **clearer split between customer facing and back office functions leading to a reduction of locality based offices and a centralisation of back office activities and staff at County Hall.** Social care services are moving from a delivery role to an increasingly commissioning and monitoring role. This will result in a shift from locality based customer facing services to back office telephone based services. **Staff remaining in the localities will be spending increasing time out of the office due to the increased focus on direct/local client contact.** The future personalisation and self-administration of social care services further releases the County Council from providing these office functions.

Intensifying the use and occupation at County Hall will require a supporting Green Travel plan. Increasing car parking at County Hall is limited by a variety of physical, planning and environmental restrictions.

There will continue to be a **need for customer facing facilities but these need to be rationalised and focused in key service delivery locations, broadly based around the County market towns and the City.**

The two Highways office areas at Croft and Mountsorrel depots are to be retained following the recent decision to reduce and rationalise Highways supporting office activities into these two locations.

3. LCC'S FUTURE OFFICE PRESENCE AND IMAGE, TYPE AND QUALITY OF OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

It is widely agreed that the **County Council's future offices should provide modern, attractive, efficient, tidy, smart and flexible working environments** consistent in the quality of facilities provided across the total portfolio.

Customer facing facilities must be welcoming and user friendly. The **County Council image, which needs to be attractive and efficient rather than glitzy**, is to be consistent across all locations.

The County Council presence needs to be evident around the county. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, such as through an enhanced and expanded use of schools and libraries, and does not necessarily require a dedicated customer-facing office facility.

The general aim of reducing and rationalising office space also applies to accommodation occupied for members, democratic and civic purposes. Members' office space at County Hall can be reduced and used more efficiently and members can make use of locality based touch-down facilities around the county. Facilities available for committee and meetings will be managed through the centralised room booking service that should manage all office and meeting facilities. In the longer term the council 'chamber' should be a general purpose, modern lecture-theatre facility widely available for large group/conference purposes when not required for council meetings.

4. LCC'S FUTURE OFFICE WORKFORCE AND WORK STYLE

Subject to expansion/contraction variations in individual service areas, it is expected that the overall office population will not increase. In the longer term, total office headcount is likely to decrease on account of increasing partnership arrangements and in reflection of the Council's continuing shift from delivering to commissioning services.

There should be a mixed economy of workstyle practices and requirements comprising fixed workstations, hot-desking, touch-down facilities and home-based working. The Workwell project indicates that there will be an increasing trend towards more flexible and mobile working with a resultant requirement for more hot-desking, touch-down and home-based facilities and less fixed workstation facilities. Whilst home-based working may be attractive to some staff and should be part of the future workstyle package offered by the Council, this is likely to relate to a minority of workers and needs careful HR support to be successful. **All future workstyle changes will be dependent upon significant HR and ICT input and investment.** It is vital that the Office Strategy is part of a total and integrated planned process for delivering the changes that the Council seeks across the related areas of HR, ICT and property resources.

More flexible working will feature extended working hours including weekends. Access to offices (not necessarily all offices or all areas of an office) will need to reflect these extended hours of working.

Notwithstanding the increased amount of flexible and mobile working, there will always be a need for team-based meeting and working facilities for mobile workers.

It is difficult to be specific or accurate when predicting future working practices. It is important, therefore, to create a flexible office portfolio that is able to adapt to meet future changes and requirements.

The Council's future working environment (modern, open plan, attractive, uniform, efficient and effective) is seen as an important tool to help cultivate the culture and workstyle changes required as part of the Council's overall Change Programme.

5. LCC'S FUTURE STORAGE PRACTICES

Current storage practices are lax and need to be improved, modernised and effectively managed. In the long term current paper storage will be replaced with electronic data and information storage systems – the EDRM project is due to commence 2010. In the short term, much could be achieved and storage space reduced through better archiving and storage house-keeping practices and disciplines.

Storage should be the subject of a separate review and strategy.

6. OFFICE STRATEGY OBJECTIVES AND REQUIRED BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

- **Cash efficiencies** and revenue savings: minimum £400,000 pa within 3 years, ideally £800,000 pa (ie 20% revenue savings)
- Tenure – whatever represents best value for the County Council
- **Flexibility in building design and layout** and within the portfolio
- **Environmental** – should aim to apply environmentally sustainable practices, subject to cost benefit analysis. The Council must be seen to promote energy efficiency and to lead by example. Parking could be a limitation and conflicting issue for intensification of use at CH – will need very effective Green Travel Plan
- Good quality working environment enabling modern working practices and providing consistent office facilities across the Council portfolio
- **Changes and investment** into the office portfolio must be **underpinned by a supporting business** case incorporating whole life cycle costing and embodying the general principle of invest to save.
- **Centralised FM services** to promote a more effective, efficient, and consistently planned and managed office portfolio.

7. Risks and Risk Management

Failing to secure staff support in the aims and delivery of the future office accommodation plan is regarded as a key risk. Actions to minimise and manage this risk include developing and implementing a proper Communication Strategy, clearly explaining the expected benefits at an individual as well as an organisational level, providing real examples or pilots of proposed new office facilities, being fair and consistent in the future provision of accommodation and phasing the delivery of changes to prevent major service disruption whilst not falling behind on the office changes planned.

Adverse public perceptions about the cost, disruption and reduction of services to the public incurred at the expense of upgrading office facilities for the benefit of council employees and members is another key risk and must be managed through the delivery of a carefully developed and managed Communication Strategy.