

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MIDSUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Joint Member Integration Board	Report Number: M25
To: Strategy Committee	Date of meeting: 10 May 2012

PROPOSED APPROACH TO BDC/MSDC OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To explain the strategic context in which a medium term (3-5 year) BDC/MSDC approach to the use of accommodation has been developed.
- 1.2 To make recommendations on how the proposed approach is implemented, including how Members will be involved in the process.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That both HQ's (Hadleigh and Needham Market) are retained in the medium term (3-5 years).
- 2.2 That the new integrated staff teams (Tiers 4 and 5) are co-located on the basis that there is no reduction, and if possible an improvement, in ease of access to the service for customers, residents and Members.
- 2.3 That the criteria for assessing each Business Case for the co-location of the new integrated staff teams be as set out in paragraph 8.16.
- 2.4 That the authority for signing off each Business Case, prior to its implementation, be the responsibility of BDC's Strategy Committee and MSDC's Executive Committee based upon advice from Management Board (Chief Executive and Directors) and recommendations from the Joint Member Integration Board (JMIB).

The Committee is able to resolve these matters.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The proposals in this report will assist in delivering the savings set out in the BDC/MSDC Business Case for integration.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 This report is most closely linked with the risks set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Efficiency and other savings or additional income identified in Business Case not achieved. <i>(Taken from BDC Risk Register).</i>	Low	Critical	Make timely informed decisions on use of accommodation.

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Failure to identify the best location for particular services resulting in unnecessary travelling costs. (<i>Taken from BDC/MSDC Integration Risk Register</i>).	Low	Critical	Make timely informed decisions on use of accommodation.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 As set out in paragraph 8.16, the Business cases for the co-location of the staff teams will take into account consultation with staff and Unions.

6. Equality Analysis

- 6.1 As set out in paragraph 8.16 the Business Cases for the co-location of the staff teams will include an Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Shared Service/Partnership Implication

- 7.1 The proposals in this report are critical in assisting in the delivery of BDC/MSDC Integration and Transformation Programme.

8. Key Information

Strategic Context

- 8.1 A key aspect of the integration and transformation programme between BDC and MSDC is the sharing of, and reduction in, use of office accommodation.

- 8.2 The medium term solution has been developed by the following key considerations:

- Both Councils are to remain as political entities
- Both currently have their own HQ's at Needham Market and Hadleigh, which are to be retained in the medium term (3-5 years)
- Both currently have areas of surplus accommodation within these HQ's, which need to be filled, again at least for this period
- There is a requirement for new staff teams to be integrated as far as possible, although final arrangements (and numbers) will not become clear until the outcomes of the Tier 4 and Tier 5 processes are evident.

Proposed Medium Term (3-5 year) Approach to Use of Accommodation

In the medium term both HQ's are to be used. This will provide flexibility and avoid taking on replacement or alternative accommodation until clarity on the shape of the new integrated structure, and the number of staff required, is known; and the full potential of opportunities arising from the Suffolk Property Partnerships have been explored. It will also ensure a retained identity for both Councils and retained access for Members.

- 8.3 The new staff teams will be brought together advised by investigations undertaken by the Accommodation Working Group, and the development of Business Cases by Heads of Service. This will improve overall service delivery and reinforce new ways of working and behaviours and generate savings.
- 8.5 Where front office services are required any co-location of a particular service at Hadleigh or Needham Market will ensure that there is no reduction, and if possible an improvement in ease of access to the service for customers, residents and Members. To achieve this, the Accommodation Working Group will work closely with the Customer Access and ICT Working Groups to provide improved access to services.
- 8.6 Initially capacity will be assessed on the basis that each staff member will be allocated a desk (unless already working from home or hot-desking). However, as we progress our integration and transformation we will review and reduce further our accommodation and costs needs. This is to be achieved through a range of measures, e.g. greater home working (supported by improved ICT), increased hot desking and satellite working (particularly through shared use of accommodation facilitated by Suffolk Property Partnership) and the development of further shared delivery partnerships such as Shared Revenue Partnership.
- 8.7 Surplus office areas will be made available for rent by external bodies which could be from the private, public or voluntary sectors with first call being through the Suffolk Property Partnership.

Proposed Next Steps

- 8.8 Identify owned assets suitable for delivering the services of both Councils.
- 8.9 Identify, through the Suffolk Property Partnership, other sources of potential accommodation.
- 8.10 Identify and address any issues, tenancy arrangements, restrictions, covenants, easements, etc that affect these assets.
- 8.11 Establish floor areas and the use of parameters in relation to space allocation.
- 8.12 Identify the rental market for floor space in Hadleigh and Needham Market.
- 8.13 Identify demographic of population including the location of customer clusters.
- 8.14 Identify major locations of work e.g. waste collection, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and Council housing maintenance.
- 8.15 Identify customer, resident and Member requirements for access for enquiries, payments, meetings.
- 8.16 Business Cases for the co-location of the new officer teams to be prepared by Heads of Service based around the delivery of the services for which they are responsible. They will take into account the following:-
 - Retention of political identities for each Council
 - No reduction, and if possible an improvement in ease of access to the service for customers, residents and Members

- ICT needs/implications
- Projected staff numbers
- Impact on staff, including overall employment obligations
- ICT and communication requirements
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Cost/benefit analysis (including modifications to buildings and staff re-location)

The above list should be considered exhaustive.

It is proposed that the above work be completed within 4 months, and will include consultation with staff and Unions.

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