



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION 1 JULY 2008

Report of the Corporate Director of Corporate and Adult Services

Accommodation Strategy - Review

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Commission note the Report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 Since the last update to the Commission in March 2007 the Council has used consultants Work Interiors to carry out a study that concludes that significant efficiencies including savings in accommodation are achievable by introducing New Ways of Working. All previous options considered by officers established that there was an affordability gap in suggested solutions as the various combinations of retaining some existing buildings and building new and /or acquiring existing developments were not affordable
- 2.2 The Work Interiors study looked into the Council's office accommodation and working practices and established that:
 - Space is significantly under used by modern standards – 30% increase in density is achievable
 - New ways of working could be introduced to improve efficiency and reduce space requirements
 - Storage needs to be radically improved
 - Office layouts, IT and telephone systems need to be improved to facilitate new ways of working and provide a better office environment.
- 2.3 To achieve this requires transformational change in working practices which will be facilitated by improvements to property and to information and communications technology (ICT). As the project progressed the consultant concluded that it was not a property project but a transformational change project. This is because there are many aspects of current practices that could be improved which will lead to more efficient working and these need to come through the cultural change of NWW facilitated by improvements in ICT and accommodation. The project has therefore been included in the Council's 'Transforming Derby' programme.

- 2.4 Whilst the final solution has not been established, the Council House is in need of major refurbishment because many of its building elements have reached the end of their life and, in its current form, it is unsuitable for modern service delivery. Subject to Cabinet approval and following a feasibility study the scheme is now ready to move to the full design stage with a view to commencing construction work in Spring or Summer next year. Initial indications are that by removing internal walls and adopting a modern, open plan office layout and by adopting NWW, the occupancy of the building can be significantly increased. The work will also involve a full refurbishment programme; resolving the long standing building maintenance backlog that has been reported over a number of years.
- 2.5 Officers are currently finalising the review of options for the alternative accommodation with a view to making a recommendation on a way forward in the next few months. Adopting NWW will significantly reduce the amount of floorspace required, thereby reducing the overall cost of the Council's accommodation.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None directly arising.

Legal

2. None.

Personnel

3. None.

Equalities impact

4. None.

Corporate priorities

5. Suitable accommodation that can be used efficiently supports the priority of giving excellent services and value for money.