

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date of Decision:	22 July 2010
Decision Title:	Winchester Workstyle Strategy
Decision Reference:	1798
Report From:	Director of Property, Business and Regulatory Services

Contact name: Howard Short

Tel: 01962 847833 **Email:** howard.short@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1.1. An update on the Workstyle programme was considered by Cabinet on 25 January 2010. Among other things, there was a discussion about the strategy for Winchester, and the future stages of the programme. Further work has been undertaken, and it is now proposed to seek agreement to a range of changes in Winchester, summarised below.

2. Contextual Information

2.1. In the context of changes for Winchester, it is probably worth briefly taking stock of the property outcomes already achieved following completion of the major Elizabeth II Court refurbishment project, which now accommodates over 1,100 staff. Buildings now vacated and disposed of include two leasehold and one freehold:

- Corinium House – returned to landlord
- Capitol House – returned to landlord
- Trafalgar House – sold subject to contract

2.2. All of the above were directly linked to the project, which released 4,500m² of space in the Winchester office, as a result of flexible working and improved utilisation. Capital receipts and the savings from leases were factored into the funding envelope of the Elizabeth II Court refurbishment.

2.3. Between them, these offices accommodated nearly 400 staff. Also vacated are the two leases at Sheridan House in Jewry Street, which are being marketed.

2.4. At Cabinet in January 2010 there was discussion about the future of Castle Avenue. Following further assessment, it is now proposed that this building should be retained, and another significant freehold be released in its place. By virtue of their scale, the candidates for disposal are either Mottisfont Court or Three Minsters House. On balance, and considering

likely value, scale and strategic positioning, it is suggested that Mottisfont Court be sold.

- 2.5. Many departments and teams across our headquarters are badly fragmented, for example, PBR&IT occupies eight separate buildings. The following proposals will co-locate staff in PBR&IT into just three locations.
- 2.6. Similar issues apply to both the Human Resources (HR) and Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs (CCRA) departments. Further displacement of teams, for example in the Chief Executive's and County Treasurer's departments, also at times presents communication difficulties.

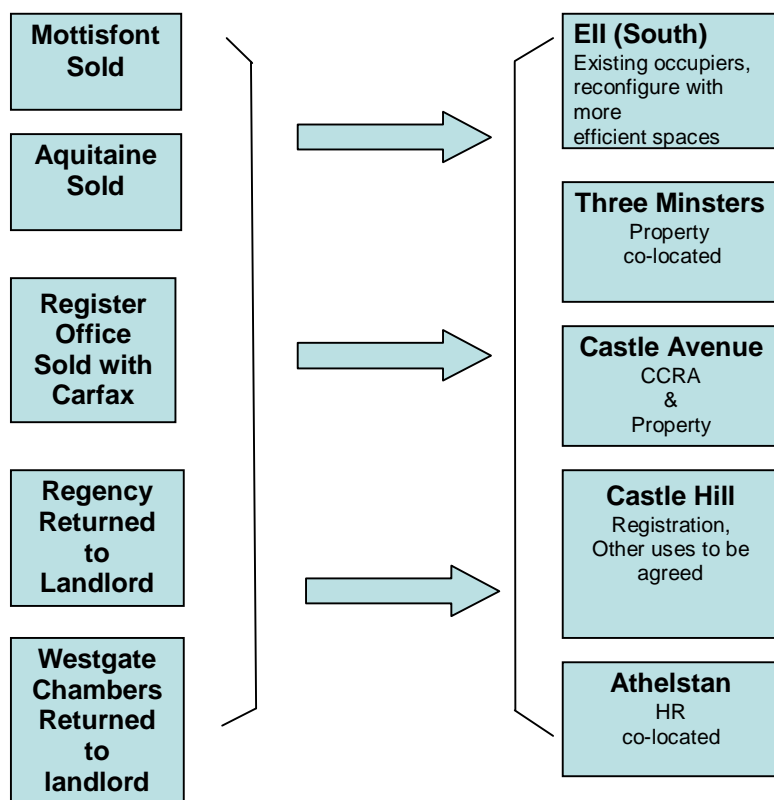
3. The Proposal Strategy

- 3.1. Following detailed analysis and discussion with a number of key stakeholders, the proposal below suggests an approach which would facilitate the release of Mottisfont Court. It would also enable the vacation of one additional freehold, Aquitaine House, together with two leases, Westgate Chambers and Regency House at the end of their respective terms, if not before - in total, some 4,200 m² of floor area. The principal benefits are that:

- CCRA would for the first time be co-located in a single HQ office
- HR would also be predominantly co-located
- The deployment of staff in EII (S) would be aligned with management structures and operational requirements
- Property Services would consolidate from four to two buildings
- Registration would relocate from Westgate Chambers, and co-locate with the Winchester Register office staff, thus releasing part of the Carfax site for disposal.

High Level Option for Winchester

(excluding E(II) N,W,E & buildings already vacated)



3.2. Overall, this proposal shows the suggestion just in terms of ‘big picture’ thinking. For each potential move there are a range of considerations, options and sub-options to work through with departments, and certain assumptions have been made about the extent to which staff can work and use space flexibly.

4. Performance & Outcomes

4.1. Developing cost-effective solutions for the next decade will deliver a range of benefits both operationally, and in terms of pure asset management. The above proposals would release some 4,200 m² of space, in the following buildings :

- Mottisfont Court – freehold for disposal
- Aquitaine House – freehold for disposal
- Winchester Register Office – freehold for disposal
- Westgate Chambers – at end of lease term
- Regency House – at end of lease term

4.2. In addition to future cost avoidance in the form of backlog maintenance liabilities, it is expected that annual revenue savings from the five buildings proposed for disposal would amount to £ 500,000. On this basis, a funding approach would be developed and proposed using a mixture of re-use of some capital receipt from the disposal of headquarters freehold, and a quantum of prudential borrowing or invest to save monies.

- 4.3. The strategy could well involve moving in the order of 1,000 staff into new locations, and from the point of implementation, it is hoped that this could be achieved within 18 to 24 months.

5. Other Opportunities

- 5.1. This report simply expresses some of the high level thinking so far. There are other elements that would need to be factored in, and other opportunities to explore. Some of these may be :

- Facilities Management (FM) – what savings could be delivered and how could further consolidation unlock more efficient delivery of core services? As part of this element of work, proposals will be developed for an FM approach to all County Council buildings across Winchester, irrespective of use to deliver further savings;
- Business Change – what is the opportunity to look at delivering greater efficiency in complementary or duplicated functions between departments?
- Drop-in – how could a strategy for flexible working be shaped around, for example, out of town drop-in, enabling less pressure on central car parking resources and space?
- Technological gains will be achieved, and the potential for significant savings exist, for example through the introduction of pull printing.

- 5.2. All of these elements would be included in the project plan for discussion and consideration.

6. Conclusions and next steps

- 6.1. Should the Executive Member be minded to agree this approach in principle, further consultation and preparatory work will be undertaken and a project plan be prepared to be shared with CMT and the Buildings, Land and Procurement Panel in due course.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1. That the approach for the next stages of the Workstyle strategy in Winchester as set out in the report, be approved in principle, and further work be undertaken to develop an action plan and associated timetable.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	No
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	Yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

Integral Appendix B

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

Equalities Impact Assessment:

A formal equalities impact assessment exists for the Hampshire Workstyle Strategy and this project would be planned so as to ensure that the principles contained in that assessment are adhered to. The project will not cause disadvantage to staff or visitors alike, and is more likely to enhance their experience.

Opportunities will actively be sought to improve the many access and equalities dimensions of the project. During the course of the design and implementation phases, formal 'gateway' reviews are undertaken at each key stage and impact assessments form an integral part of the process.

Impact on Crime and Disorder:

No impact has been identified.

Climate Change:

The project will contribute to a net reduction in carbon footprint in the City through reduced desktop computers and printers. The organisation's carbon footprint will also be reduced through more efficient use of property and disposal of buildings.

Integral Appendix C

FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTEES:

OTHER FORMAL CONSULTEES:

Organisation	Reason for Consultation	Date Consulted	Response:
Cllr F Allgood	Local Member	07.07.10	Cllr Allgood commented as follows: "I support the basic approach outlined in the document. I agree that we should not consider disposing of the Castle Avenue buildings. They are an important part of the Winchester scene and should remain with the County Council. I am not happy about the proposed sale of Mottisfont Court as that has proved to a very useful facility for the county council and it has an important position next to the main headquarters. I will look into the possibility of the Winchester HAT considering this matter and submitting some comments." Senior officers in Property Business and Regulatory Services (PBRS) have responded to Councillor Allgood explaining the Business Case efficiencies resulting from the sale of Mottisfont Court. This building will be surplus to requirements and cannot be considered a 'core' building. The release of revenue savings and capital will all be recycled into services, facilities and savings as in line with the Efficiencies agenda.
Cllr J Porter	Local Member	07.07.10	Cllr Mrs Porter responded to the consultation by telephone conversation with Senior Officers in PBRS and this answered all of her questions.
Cllr C Bailey	Local Member	07.07.10	Cllr Mrs Bailey has responded to the consultation and asked for clarification on the following points:

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are the redundant buildings being marketed and for what uses? 2. Does this fit in with the long term strategy of Winchester City Council? 3. How will the well-being of staff be protected when working at home and in the office? <p>Senior officers in PBRS are currently responding directly to this enquiry as there was insufficient time to undertake this before final despatch.</p>
Cllr B Collin	Local Member	07.07.10	<p>Cllr Collin confirmed that he welcomed the consolidation of the Council's headquarters office accommodation as it would appear to have significant synergies with current efficiency measures. This will be needed given the pressure on HQ staff numbers that will be felt in the next few years. The Director of Property, Business and Regulatory Services has also responded to a number of specific questions about the office portfolio in Winchester and welcomed the opportunity for dialogue with the City Council on the strategic implications to the town of the release of more of out office estate. Councillor Collin confirmed that he would respond further, after publication, in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Winchester on the City Council.</p>
Cllr P Dickens	Local Member	07.07.10	<p>Councillor Mrs Dickens asked that the Director of Property Business and Regulatory Services engage with Winchester City Council to ensure that the future release of further office accommodation in Winchester is integrated into the strategic planning of the City. This is of significance given that Hampshire County Council will be releasing and marketing over 4,000m² of office accommodation over a short period. In relation to development of the Carfax site in Winchester (related to the Workstyle Strategy because of the re-provision of the Register Office), Councillor Mrs Dickens raised concerns over additional housing numbers in the centre of Winchester putting further pressure on the school pupil places in the City. In response, the Director of Property Business and Regulatory Services confirmed that when the planning position on the site was deferred by the City Council, the impact of additional residential units would be factored into properties by the Director of Children's Services.</p>

			<p>The Director of Property Business and Regulatory Services confirmed that staff at the Register Office had been kept informed of the proposals to move to another location in Central Winchester. Councillor Mrs Dickens enquired as to where the Information Centre in Mottisfont Court would be re-sited. As yet, no firm plans have been confirmed. This is the subject of feasibility work actively being undertaken and a firm recommendation will be made in a future report to the Executive Member Policy and Resources.”</p>
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