

## **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION REVIEW SCOPING**

Presented by the Head of Parklands

### **SUMMARY**

At the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 21 November 2019 it was agreed that the next Scrutiny Review would be to consider the future office accommodation requirements of the Authority. This report outlines the areas that could be considered as part of that review. Officers are seeking Members thoughts and approval of the areas that are outlined within the report to enable a comprehensive review to be undertaken.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Members Approve: (1) the scope of the Office Accommodation review as outlined within this report.

### **BACKGROUND**

- 1 At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21 November 2019 Members discussed which areas could be the subject of the next Scrutiny Review.
- 2 With management of the six sports venues shortly to be undertaken by a third party with its own office accommodation and the new business plan 2020 – 2025 it was considered an opportune time to review the Authority's office accommodation requirements.
- 3 The Executive Committee of 19 December 2019 noted that Scrutiny Committee's next review will focus on the Authority's future office accommodation requirements.

### **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY**

- 4 It is important to align an office accommodation strategy with that of the overarching business plan. Office accommodation, planned in tandem with progressive human resource strategies, process engineering and technological solutions, can drive out unnecessary property costs and can transform service delivery operations and lead to efficiencies.
- 5 Under-utilised office accommodation assets can lead to unnecessary costs,

reducing the resources available for frontline service and business delivery.

- 6 New ways of working and having a head office function that will, in turn, potentially change future office requirements and levels of demand for physical office space. It is essential to coordinate all these changing requirements, provide the strategic lead that is needed and develop an office accommodation strategy that will identify, plan and provide the Authority with the necessary office accommodation whilst meeting with best value and affordability requirements.
- 7 In considering its office accommodation requirement the Authority has an opportunity to address any issues that may have been experienced by staff, Members and business visitors arising from current provision.

#### **CURRENT OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

- 8 Myddelton House was acquired by the Authority in the late 1960's and has been the Authority's head office since. The majority of office accommodation is located here with a small amount of office space available across the venues which is mainly utilised by venue operational staff save for one office within the Velodrome.
- 9 Myddelton House costs circa £300,000 per annum to operate as the Authority's headquarters, with the gardens costing an additional £200,000 per annum.
- 10 There are a number of reasons for the Authority to consider its position with regard to continuing to be based at Myddelton House including:
  - a change in the nature and size of services provided by the Authority following the letting of the new Leisure Services Contract;
  - an opportunity to explore changes to the current working nature of Myddelton house (due to its design) to potentially create a more open working environment;
  - an opportunity to review and utilise more efficient ways of working and delivering services, e.g., mobile and home or remote working and explore other technological advancements;
  - improved management of work/life balance which in turn would aid recruitment and retention of staff;
  - an opportunity for greater energy efficiency and sustainability;
  - an opportunity to reduce accommodation costs to improve on budget performance and continued reliance on the levy as part of the levy review process.

#### **FUTURE OFFICE ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 11 There is a need to identify opportunities for potential future efficiencies and working arrangements that will balance both the needs of the Authority and its staff, embraces available technology, is based on an outputs/results focus i.e., effectiveness of staff in terms of delivery of services, and reduces reliance on 'formal' office space.
- 12 The area required to accommodate the Authority's workforce is dependent on the number of staff that the Authority requires to be working in a 'formal' office space, remote and flexible working and technological solutions.

- 13 A well designed and managed work force environment is important to successful recruitment and retention of skilled staff in competitive markets.
- 14 Therefore, officers have drafted a list of aspects that should be considered when looking at the Authority's needs for future office accommodation, including:
- **Assets**
    - Number of desk spaces, both fixed and hot desks
    - Number of offices
    - Number and size of permanent officer meeting rooms
    - Requirements for Member meeting space to allow public attendance etc
    - Reception area and how it is staffed
    - Car parking requirements
    - Storage space
  - **New Working Practices – Remote and Flexible**
    - Assess current and potential working practices, what has worked and what has not and why
    - Review flexible working policy
    - Develop remote working policy
    - Work towards a paperless office / electronic files in so far as possible
  - **Technology**
    - Review utilisation of available technology, such as Video Conferencing/virtual conference rooms
    - IT Infrastructure
    - Location of servers, phone system and network hardware (Firewalls etc)
  - **Location and Access**
    - Access by public transport
    - Access by road
    - Location in regard to the Park's 26 mile length;
    - Easy access to London and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
    - Environmental impact of travel to the location
    - Congestion charge zones and expansion of the ULEZ
  - **Future Proofing**
    - Can the accommodation expand to accept more staff?
    - Can the accommodation reduce both spatially and therefore financially if required?
    - Does the location have any known improvements or negative impacts in terms of road; rail and public transport systems?
  - **Relocation**
    - Should Myddelton House become surplus to requirements, the potential future disposal of the house (and possibly gardens taking into account the Lottery Funding requirements) to provide budget reductions with a capital receipt or rental income
    - Cost of relocation and ongoing costs for utilities, Internet connections, phone lines etc

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 15 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 16 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 17 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. If approved and we explore options then human resource implications will be assessed for each option explored and staff will be fully consulted throughout.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 18 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 19 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 20 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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Author: Jon Carney, 01992 709 804, [jcarney@leevalleypark.org.uk](mailto:jcarney@leevalleypark.org.uk)

### **BACKGROUND REPORTS**

None

### **PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Scrutiny Committee S/40/19 Scrutiny Review Topics 21 November 2019