

Joint Committee
25th November 2010

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Flexible Working and Accommodation Report

Recommendation

1. That the Joint Committee approves the introduction of flexible and mobile working across the whole of Worcestershire Regulatory Services in line with this report.

2. That the Joint Committee approves the principle of consolidation of Worcestershire Regulatory Services into a single office site within the local government property estate and delegates to the Management Board authority to enter into a lease for the occupation of Wyatt House subject to satisfactory completion of contractual arrangements and agreement in accordance with recommendation 3 below.

3. That S. 151 Officers of Partner Councils agree the necessary financial arrangements to ensure that the overall cost of accommodation is reduced below that in the Detailed Business Case for Worcestershire Regulatory Services and that no individual partner Council suffers significant financial detriment.

(In accordance with the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership agreement, Part I - Schedule 1 9.5.2, a decision on this recommendation shall not be effective without a unanimous decision of all members attending and entitled to vote thereon).

Introduction/Summary

The combined WRS of the 7 authorities has recently undergone a review of its working practices to move towards a flexible and mobile approach to its field operation. The finding of that review has shown that using flexible working the current 170 fixed desks located at 7 council offices can be reduced to a maximum of 95 if they are located at a single central site, with potential for further reduction to 70 on operation of business transformation.

Background

In June 2010 the establishment of WRS was based on reducing the overall budget of the Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing serviced by 17.2% over 3 years.

To this end the combined staffing level was to be reduced from 165 to 134 with a further transformational reduction to 120 or less.

The sole desk occupancy of [most of] the authorities with its space demands, together with duplication of infrastructure, storage, etc identified areas for efficiency savings.

Part of the project was therefore to look at flexible and mobile working, i.e. working at home, from home, or from touchdown points around the County. Touchdown facilities can be delivered from existing points within the 7 authorities or from Hub centres.

It is the minority of staff who need a fixed desk and by bringing these together into a single location with an additional minimum number of flexible working points for field staff, savings can be made.

The authorities can readily reuse the existing accommodation or have plans in train to alter their property arrangements to new locations.

The attached detailed business case explains the rationale behind the move to flexible working across the WRS and the benefits that such working and single site occupation would bring.

Report

Financial Implications

The financial analysis at Section 7 of the attached detailed business case shows that a saving of £640,000 could be achieved over a 5 year period by moving to a single site.

Sustainability

Contact Points

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Background Papers

Attached detailed business case.
