

Business Change Mandate (Including Budget Mandates) Proposal Number: B18

Title: Strategic Property Review

All information requested must be completed on the proposed mandate to enable the Cabinet to decide whether to proceed with the proposal.

Mandate Completed by	Deb Hill-Howells & Ben Winstanley
Date	14 th September 2015

How much savings will it generate and over what period?
£160k in 16/17
Directorate & Service Area responsible
Estates, Enterprise
Mandate lead(s)
Deb Hill-Howells & Ben Winstanley

Final mandate approved by Cabinet	Date:
--	--------------

1. Vision and Outcomes of the Mandate

Give a business context for the mandate. This must pick up on the vision and what the new / improved / reduced service will look like in the future including the anticipated experience of users. It must also consider any impact on the Council's key priorities and strategic outcomes. Similarly does it impact on service performance within the immediate service area or any impact on other services provided by the authority / any other providers. In doing so, the mandate must be tested against the equality impact assessment and sustainable development impact assessment and must consider impact in relation to the new Future Generations Bill.

What is the issue that the proposal is seeking to address?
Reduce property holding costs, maximise the use of and generation of income from the Councils property portfolio.
What evidence have you got that this needs to be addressed?
Revenue is being allocated to hold properties which diverts income from front line service delivery, ongoing financial pressures and good asset management practices require that the property portfolio is regularly reviewed. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose, meets the needs of service providers and users and income streams are being maximised whilst expenditure is minimised.
How will this proposal address this issue
This proposal identifies a number of opportunities to reduce holding costs through the relinquishing of leases, maximising the occupancy of staff at County Hall and rationalising our depots holdings. Revenue generation will be through the creation of arm's length companies that enable us to let and manage our property assets within a commercial environment and the identification of additional rental generation opportunities.
What will it look like when you have implemented the proposal
Non location sensitive staff would be centralised within our Usk headquarters. This will require adaptations to J & E block to accommodate the additional staff. Current indications are that approximately 95 staff could be accommodated in J block and 38 in E block. J block is currently leased to Coleg Gwent, however they will shortly be relinquishing their lease. E block is currently used to store our red files, electoral registration storage and legal / planning documents. In addition the bus drivers mess room is located within a converted toilet block at the far end of the building. This can be accessed separately from the remainder of the building and it is proposed that this use continues. It is proposed to re-locate the legal, planning and electoral registration storage to the residual element of the registrars building (as there is no toilet provision). Red storage can either be provided off site through a private provider (current estimates are in the region of 15k pa based on existing storage) or within surplus areas of other buildings (we are advised that there are school premises with residual capacity that could meet this need). This will enable the provision of 38 workspaces in a discrete environment which would be suitable for Social Services teams who need to operate within a confidential zone. This will however leave a residual requirement for the elections team as they will need suitable accommodation to manage the annual election process. It is proposed that the SW ground floor corridor of J block is sub divided into meeting space which is

available 11 months of the year, and blocked booked for the elections team for the duration required to manage the election. This will involve the rooms being capable of temporary sub partition to maximise meeting space when not being used by elections as well as installing security locks controlling access when appropriate and the creation of a self-contained access point for the delivery of postal votes, issuing of ballot boxes etc. This option enables us to design the space to maximise use, however management procedures will still need to be implemented during the election period to control vehicular movements, security, public access etc. J block is a cellular building that is in need of both maintenance and refurbishment to accommodate staff. Designs are being produced and it is anticipated that 90 workstations could be provided, accommodating circa 200 staff. Due to the cellular layout of the building, the office accommodation will have a different configuration to the headquarters building and refurbishment costs will be minimised wherever possible. Costs for the works to be both E and J block are expected to be in the region of £1,500,000, but this is subject to more detailed design work to determine and accurate figure.

Re-locating staff to County Hall will enable us to reduce holding costs at Innovation House and to advertise and secure private tenants, thereby generating a rental income. The timing of this will be determined by the securing of funding and completion of adaptations to J & E block as detailed above.

It is proposed to establish an arm's length agency to manage the letting of residential properties on the basis of assured shorthold tenancies, a practice that has been widely adopted in English authorities. The purpose of this would be entirely to generate rental income from our existing estate as well as the acquisition of additional properties dependent on demand. In addition it is proposed that an arm's length development company is established to manage the development of existing assets as well as the acquisition of commercial investment opportunities. The requirement to create both companies is to streamline decision making to enable commercial opportunities to be undertaken, whilst ensuring that net profits flow back to the Council. Further appraisal is required to establish the legal frameworks and funding opportunities that would accrue from such a proposition and the benefits and dis-benefits to the Council.

The depot holdings would be rationalised, in particular the grounds and highways crews would be re-located from Llanfoist depot to enable a partial release for alternative development. Early discussions with the planning authority have indicated that industrial uses would be acceptable.

We will continue to relinquish leases where possible and maximise revenue generation from surplus and investment assets.

Expected positive impacts

More opportunities to act in a commercial manner and generate income streams. Reducing property holding costs to support front line service delivery

Expected negative impacts

Potentially negative reaction to MCC creating commercial arm and competing in private market to generate profit, potential negative reaction from users and colleagues affected by proposals to reduce assets.

2. Savings proposed

Show how the budget mandate will make savings against the current service budget. This must cover each year implicated. This section must also cover any other efficiency that will arise from the mandate.

What savings and efficiencies are expected to be achieved?								
Service area	Current Budget £	Proposed Cash Savings £	Proposed non cash efficiencies – non £	Target year				Total Savings proposed
				16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	
Property Services or Estates, dependent when Innovation House holding budget is transferred from Property Services to Estates.	368k	50k		100k				Reduction in running costs as a result of the re-location of staff to County Hall (this includes 3 months rates relief, cancelling the clearing contract and reduced utility costs).
Arm's length companies		10k (income not saving)		10k				This will be derived from the residential agency service. Given the early stage of this proposal, this income remains high risk. Too soon to define potential in forthcoming years.
Various services	15k	10k		10k				Termination of leases. The saving is the rental due to the landlord. The remaining budget is made up of utilities etc. and will be required to support their alternative provision.
Operations, Depots rationalisation,	147k	20k		20k				Further work required to ascertain alternative provision at the waste

part release of Llanfoist deport								transfer station at Llanfoist.
Increased rental income	1,400k income target 15/16	20k additional rental income		20k				Income derived from letting additional properties (TIC in Abergavenny) and rental uplifts where possible.

3. Options

Prior to the mandate being written, an options appraisal will have taken place. Summarise here the outcome of the Options considered and detail the rationale on why they were disregarded. (see options appraisal guide for further information)

Options	Reason why Option was not progressed	Decision Maker
Do nothing	This is not sustainable and would not result in effective estate management	Estates
Retain Innovation House as an operational asset and operate from split headquarters	This would not enable us to maximise the use of Usk County Hall and would also prevent us from generating an additional revenue stream. Also travelling expenses being incurred by colleagues travelling between the sites (estimated at approx. 5 – 6 k per annum).	Estates
Operate residential lettings via MCC Estates team	Due to the secure nature of the tenancies that we are required to provide this would not be possible.	Estates

4. Consultation

Have you undertaken any initial consultation on the idea(s)?		
Name	Organisation/ department	Date
Initial discussion with Service leads undertaken whilst developing Property Review	Operations / Social Services/ Enterprise	August / September 15

Has the specific budget mandate been consulted on?		
Function	Date	Details of any changes made?
Department Management Team		
Other Service Contributing to / impacted		
Senior leadership team		
Select Committee		
Public or other stakeholders		
Cabinet (sign off to proceed)		

Will any further consultation be needed?		
Name	Organisation/ department	Date
Will need to undertake further detailed work to ascertain the viability of the arm's length companies proposed	Estates	

5. Actions to deliver the mandate

Describe the key activities that will be undertaken to deliver the mandates and the action holders. This includes any actions contributed to by other services. Give the timescales to complete the work. This must also factor in any business activities that will need to be done differently or cease in order to achieve the mandate.

Action	Officer/ Service responsible	Timescale
Serve notice on leases that are no longer required.	BW	asap
Innovation House, revenue savings	CH or RO'D (dependent on where budget sits)	Available at point property is vacant.

Establish legal, funding position and staffing structure for arm's length company & therefore viability of proposals	DHH/BW	
Work with Operations to establish viability of re-locating users from Llanfoist depot and other rationalisation proposals within property review	BW & RH	To be determined
Conclude designs for J & E block, secure funding and undertake refurbishment works	RO'D	Sept - June

6. Additional resource/ business needs

Describe any additional finance, resource and capability needed in order to carry out the proposed mandate successfully. For example new funding, expertise e.g. marketing and knowledge etc..

Any additional investment required	Where will the investment come from	Any other resource/ business need (non-financial)
Specialist advice on options for incorporation and legal structure of company	External providers	
Specialist advice on funding options and how to ensure that the profit generated is pass ported back to MCC	External providers & Finance colleagues	
Lessons learnt from English authorities already operating similar models	Peer organisations	
Design & Funding for the refurbishment works to J& E block	MCC Capital	Technical provision for design & construction works
Letting agents for Innovation House	Revenue (Estates)	

7. Measuring performance on the mandate

How do you intend to measure the impact of the mandate? This could include: speed of service; quality of service; customer satisfaction; unit cost; overall cost. For advice on developing performance measures you can contact Policy and Performance Team, for advice on unit costs speak with your directorate accountant.

Focus- Budget / Process / Staff / Customer	Indicator	Actual 2016/17	Actual 2017/18	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2019/20	Target 2016/17	Target 2017/18	Target 2018/19	Target 2019/20

Budget	Income generated through arm's length vehicles	10k							
Budget	Savings generated through the rationalisation of the estate	130k							
Budget	Meeting income projections	20k							

8. Key Risks and Issues

Are there any potential barriers and risks that will need to be managed in delivering the mandate, including any negative impacts identified in section 1 that need to be accounted for. Also, set out the steps that will be taken to mitigate these. The risks should be scored in accordance with the [council's policy](#).

Barrier or Risk	Strategic/ Operational	Reason why identified (evidence)	Risk Assessment			Mitigating Actions	Post mitigation risk level
			Likelihood	Impact	Overall Level		
Legal or technical impediments to proposed creation of arm's length companies	operational	New venture for the authority, format of structure and support of members needs to be established.	Medium	High	High	Undertake specialist discussions as soon as possible to understand appropriate frameworks and lessons learnt from English authorities. Consultation with members to mitigate any concerns over loss of control	Medium
Operations unable to rationalise depots	operational	Initial discussions have confirmed that the proposal is feasible, but more detailed work required to ascertain detail.	Low	High	Medium	Working with Operations to rationalise holdings without compromising service requirements (i.e. retain salt barn insitu on Llanfoist but free up remainder by consolidating at former tip site across the road)	Medium
As property budgets are devolved to service areas unable to drive or maximise savings and rationalisation	strategic	Innovation House budget highlights that whilst Estates hold responsibility for management of the property portfolio and this mandate, all budgets are	Medium	Medium	Medium	Work with Finance colleagues to ascertain the opportunities to centralise property holding costs to Estates to enable them to identify greater opportunities for savings.	Medium

		devolved making it difficult to drive savings.					
Unable to identify funding necessary to undertake adaptation works to J & E block	operational	No funding stream identified and capital pressure significant due to 21 st century schools programme	High	High	High	Design will be minimalistic, however will still need to ensure that it is compliant with legislation and provides equality of access.	High

9. Assumptions

Describe any assumptions made that underpin the justification for the option.

Assumption	Reason why assumption is being made (evidence)	Decision Maker
Members will support the creation of arm's length companies	Would only be able to derive some of the proposed income stream if service is delivered through arm's length company (residential letting agency) due to the nature of the tenancy agreements.	Council
Leases will be able to be relinquished by services.	Discussions ongoing with services and Estates regarding the re-location of the service into suitable alternative accommodation.	Service managers
Operations are able to rationalise their depots holdings without impacting service delivery or breaching contract arrangements with Sewtra	Discussions with Head of Operations and preliminary review of the depots estate.	Head of Operations
Adaptations will be undertaken at County Hall to enable the revenue savings to be made and future	If funding is not forthcoming to undertake adaptations to J & E blocks we will not be able to secure any revenue savings for Innovation House. In addition we will not be able to let the floor space to private tenants, further reducing our revenue liabilities as well as generating a rental income stream.	

income generated through commercial lettings.		

10. Monitoring the budget mandate

The budget mandates must be monitored through directorate budget monitoring. This will lead into corporate budget monitoring. In addition the action plan, performance measures and the risk assessment must be transferred into the service plans for the business area in order to monitor and challenge the delivery of the budget mandate, including the savings being achieved and the level of impact.

11. Evaluation

It is important to evaluate the impact of the mandate once it has been fully delivered to know whether it has successfully achieved what it set out to do and to ensure that findings can be used to inform future work.

Planned Evaluation Date	Who will complete the evaluation?
Quarterly through Estates Business Plan	Ben Winstanley & Deb Hill-Howells