

## LEADERSHIP GROUP

### Space Utilisation and Workplace Design

#### Executive Summary

1. LG agreed to commission a space utilisation and workplace design review at its meeting of 9 December 2013 to better understand how we currently use our space and identify opportunities to use our workspace differently to reflect our various working patterns.

2. This paper is split into three parts: part 1 explains how space utilisation and workplace design supports the Parliament's strategic plan; part 2 identifies a number of current issues around space use and identifies two case studies for consideration; and part 3 identifies future opportunities to integrate space, technology and people to adopt a more flexible design of our workspaces.

3. This papers asks LG:

- a. Do you support adopting a more strategic approach to current and future space planning issues and implementing the principles of a flexible workplace design?

And if so

- b. Would you like us to explore one of the case studies provided to pilot the proposed new space principles on a wider scale?

#### Issues and Options

##### **Part 1 - Strategic Overview**

1. Our priorities for change in the strategic plan include a '*strategic review of future resource requirements to prioritise activities and to ensure continued value for money*'. Space is a finite resource and its effective and efficient use underpins many of our aims and priorities for change. A strategic framework for flexible workplace design will help equip us to provide an agile response to constitutional change which will be particularly important in the face of further budgetary pressures.

2. The design and use of our workspaces is most effective when it is integrated with technology requirements and suitable working practices to reflect our variety of working patterns. The digital parliament programme has already begun to move us away from a more traditional model of working and towards embracing mobile technology.

3. BIT already recognise that the way we work has changed in recent years and that mobile technology is one of the key enablers to flexible working and supporting the variety of working practices and patterns across the Parliament. This is demonstrated by their approach to the current technology refresh programme which aims to provide SPS staff with the appropriate technology to facilitate and support Parliamentary business. Mobile technology offers greater flexibility by enabling staff to carry out their work in multiple locations depending on the task. As a result we can

make better use of underutilised traditional workspaces by redesigning them to better reflect the different types of work we do, for example by creating project spaces. There is also an opportunity to align workplace design with job roles and technology requirements for example by providing touch down areas for people working on the move.

4. The design and use of our workspaces, advancing technology and HR policies are also key enablers to organisational development which aims to ensure our activities are consistent, aligned, adaptable and responsive to our emerging needs. Working styles are moving towards greater collaboration and increased project working. This creates a demand for greater co-location and project workspaces. A more flexible approach to workplace design allows us to create new environments for different ways of working to encourage innovation and maximise productivity.

## **Part 2 - Current Working Space Issues**

5. The number of Full Time Equivalents's reduced by 66 in 2013/14 following the change management programme. As a result some office spaces are under-utilised; however, isolated pockets of spaces released within office areas cannot be easily shared with other teams. There are other office spaces which are under increasing pressure to accommodate additional workstations; however, teams are constrained beyond a certain capacity when desks are allocated on a 1:1 ratio basis.

6. The space utilisation and workplace design review identified a number of current issues around space use:

- a. In some areas a small increase in numbers cannot be easily accommodated due to traditional workplace design and desk allocation. This could affect any office increasing its numbers including potential space allocation for new apprentices and any new requirement for project space. To date additional capacity issues have been addressed on an individual basis, usually achieved by reducing desks sizes. However, this does not produce a sustainable approach to ensuring our space use is efficient to support business areas going forward.
- b. There is scope to improve meeting spaces by addressing the technology and furniture available within them. This is currently being addressed through the digital meeting room project, as part of the digital parliament programme, which aims to ensure efficient use of shared spaces to consume/ collaborate digitally.
- c. Desire for more project spaces and spaces for collaborative working.
- d. Our ability to provide an agile response to any change arising from the Smith Commission (strategic priority for change).

7. FM is best placed to provide advice on space allocation and workplace design for optimum efficiency and effectiveness. We have the option to continue adopting a reactive approach to new space requirements by reducing desk sizes as far as possible and if necessary placing staff amongst other teams. This could result in

inadequate space allocated for some functions, team members isolated from colleagues, uncomfortable working conditions and may prohibit the creation of more innovative and inspiring workspaces.

8. In order to address current issues we recommend a more flexible approach to workplace design, approved by LG. The space occupied by the digital parliament team is an example of a space that has been designed with flexible workplace principles, albeit on a very small scale. This space must be conducive to mobile working and present choices for different types of work. Plans have now been finalised based around the use of mobile technology and choice of workstations e.g. sit or stand desks and touch down area, desk sharing - there are no pedestals associated with individual workstations, and the creation of a project space for use by others. We hope this small pilot will showcase some of the advantages of adopting a more radical approach to workplace design for the benefit of the wider organisation. This approach could also be adopted for the case studies below.

### **Case studies**

#### *BIT Office*

9. The BIT office space is reaching full capacity, desks sizes have recently been reduced and whilst this approach could be adopted for the whole office, it doesn't provide the most effective use of space and has itself limitations. The gradual increase in desks has been at the detriment of more informal working areas which were valued by staff as effective spaces. BIT has also requested additional space for building PCs (currently undertaken within COMMS rooms).

#### *Events and Exhibitions Office*

10. There are plans to re-design the new workspace for the Events and Exhibitions Office including the introduction of some touchdown spaces and desk sharing to accommodate potentially further increased numbers (resulting from ad hoc major events and the income generation project). Alternatives to this flexible approach include: relocation of the Events and Exhibitions office to another space within the building which is currently under occupied; creation of a project space to accommodate temporary staff. These alternatives may still be relevant depending on the number of staff increases.

### **Part 3 - Opportunities**

11. The recent space utilisation and workplace design review identifies a number of emerging themes based on a review of our current patterns of use. It also highlights opportunities to address current issues by adopting a flexible approach to our workspace design and utilisation– refer to the annexe for the executive summary of the review.

12. There are many benefits to a more flexible workspace design including:
- Enabling us to better accommodate emerging needs by being more adaptable;
  - Creating spaces that are more flexible to cope with periodic/seasonal increases and decreases in size of project teams;
  - Enhancing business continuity through reduced space requirements and greater mobile working;

- Enabling better collaboration by allowing staff to intermingle more and sit with different teams as their needs require;
- Ensuring staff are supported with the appropriate spaces, technology and policies to enable them to fulfil their Parliamentary role.

13. Flexible workspace design is about equipping staff with the choice to work at the most effective location at the most effective time necessary to meet business demand.

14. Options for flexible working can also include the allocation of space and IT to be based on working patterns rather than status. A template for applying this to SPS job roles is set out in the table below and is aligned with BIT's categorisation of job types and associated IT requirements. Workspaces could include touch down areas, more shared spaces for collaborative working across teams, quiet space, project rooms and meeting rooms.

Job Type / Nature of Work	Information Technology	Space	Human Resources
A. Nomadic	More laptops and tablets, fewer desktop computers; mobile telephone only for calls	Touchdown desks only; allocated storage; plenty of accessible power sockets; some quiet space and meeting space available with acoustic separation between them; 'focus booths' for confidential phone calls.	Allow remote working through clear policies
B. Mobile	Fewer desktop PC's, unallocated; more laptops.	Some touchdown areas and opportunities for both quiet and collaborative work available.	Allow remote working through clear policies
C. Anchored	Retain desktop PC's, wired phones	Desks mostly allocated	Allow remote working through clear policies.

15. Moving towards more efficient use of our spaces, where enhanced IT is an enabler to greater mobility and increased flexibility, requires new workspace principles on which space planning decisions are based. Key principles for a more flexible workplace design could include:

- Space allocation is based on activity and staff should use the appropriate space for the activity.

- Team areas are not seen as exclusive and are available to others in the organisation as needs arise.
- Clear desk policies and the use of storage wall lockers, integrated with the office furniture, instead of pedestals free desks up to be used by others (realising greater efficiency arising from the 51% occupancy of many desks for roles that do not necessarily require a dedicated desk).
- Staff with dedicated desks should comply with the clear desk policy so their desks are available for use by others when they are not in (again, storage wall lockers will help enable this).

16. As part of the 2015 Civil Service Reform Plan most public sector organisations have matured in this area (including the Scottish Government) and have taken flexible workplace design to the next level by reducing the ratio of people to desks from 1:1 to 8 desks per 10 people. This approach requires desk sharing amongst teams and even a modest change in the ratio of desks to people can achieve benefits, such as:

- increased capacity;
- freed up space which traditionally housed little used workstations to accommodate more effective spaces such as
  - i. project spaces,
  - ii. quiet working areas or
  - iii. informal meeting spaces.

17. The evidence gathered during the space utilisation review identifies some offices (including Facilities Management, BIT, Events and Exhibitions, Visitor Services and Broadcasting) where a more flexible workplace design working means such policies could be more easily introduced.

18. Embracing a flexible workplace design in a strategic and integrated way is beyond the influence of the Facilities Management office alone and will require Leadership Group buy-in and a coordinated approach with HR and BIT offices working with FM to implement changes. FM have already established a space management working group with members from BIT (Head of Infrastructure) and HR (Deputy Head of HR) to apply expertise from their own area to ensure a consistent and informed approach to space changes and it is proposed that this group is best placed to drive forward change in workplace design.

### **Resource Implications**

19. There may be potentially significant resource implications from the effective design of our workplaces although it is difficult to quantify those savings until we can fully appreciate the impact of additional powers and further budgetary constraints. However there will be more efficient and effective use of space by:

- Accommodating fluctuating staff numbers in teams within the existing space available.
- Better matches between the task and workplace for staff members
  - i. more conducive to collaborative working
  - ii. more conducive to quiet working

20. It should be noted that the innovation fund is funding the changes to the digital parliament room which are estimated to be in the region of £15k.

21. If LG would like us to take forward one of the case studies based on the proposed new flexible workplace design principles, we will report back to LG in January 2015 with a proposed timeline and budget for the pilot.

### **Dependencies**

22. Successful implementation of change to the design of our workspaces is dependent on:

- The need for flexibility and adaptability within our workspaces to effectively support the strategic priorities for change.
- Effective consultation with staff
- Close collaboration between FM, BIT and HR.

### **Governance issues**

23. There are equalities and health and safety considerations associated with any change to the design of our workspaces. Many public sector organisations have successfully implemented flexible working policies whilst taking into account the specific needs of individuals. Before piloting any changes, both equalities and health and safety will be consulted and an EQIA will be completed for specific pilots / projects.

### **Publication Scheme**

24. This paper can be published in accordance with the SPCB's publication scheme.

### **Next steps**

25. If LG agree to address one of the case studies FM will work with HR and BIT to produce project plans and change management procedures including:

- Consult with staff
- Agree metrics that will establish the level of success
- Establish a budget and timeline
- Develop a communication strategy
- Space plan the new arrangement
- Consult with staff in affected offices
- Make the changes
- Show other staff the new environment
- Evaluate and tweak the space if needed
- Review and feedback to LG.

### **Decision**

26. LG are asked:

- a. Do you support adopting a more strategic approach to current and future space planning issues and implementing a more flexible approach to workplace design?

And if so,

- b. Would you like us to explore one of the case studies provided to pilot the proposed new space principles on a wider scale?

**Facilities Management**  
**November 2014**

## Executive summary

The Scottish Parliament, through the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB), has identified the need to consider the potential for its accommodation to meet current and future operational needs and aspirations.

AMA was commissioned to conduct an audit of all spaces in the Holyrood building other than MSP areas, committee rooms and the Debating Chamber, a space utilisation study of the spaces reviewed and interviews with eleven key people, and to advise on future changes.

Based on a space audit and space utilisation survey from five working days in late June, the overall average of desk occupancy for the 659 desks observed is found to be 51%, slightly below the average in the AMA WorkWare database of 53%<sup>1</sup>. Monday and Friday are less occupied, while the midweek days when Parliament is in session, are more occupied. All the groups have a relatively similar occupancy that is quite close to the average.

A total of 657 meetings in meeting spaces were observed across the week: 32% in meeting rooms, 22% in the garden lobby, 21% at the desk, 10% in solo offices and 3% at meeting tables in open plan or shared offices. Half of all meetings are for only two people. In meeting rooms, 35% of meetings are for only two people, while two thirds are for four people or fewer.

The average area per desk is 9.3m<sup>2</sup> net internal area (NIA)<sup>2</sup>. There are 72 meeting spaces with 353 chairs so that the ratio of meeting seats to desks is 1 seat to 1.8 desks, which is typical of effective office buildings.

The equipment provided in most meeting rooms is somewhat inadequate and poorly located within the rooms, and most rooms have no write on surfaces, such as whiteboards. Some rooms are particularly cramped, with insufficient room to move behind seated persons.

Most groups occupy discrete spaces and are not collocated with others, however it is feasible to collocate more in order to encourage collaboration. Decisions about how space is used have typically been made in the absence of a strategic context. There is scope to change this and ensure that space use decisions are made in the light of Parliamentary goals and to improve responses to future needs through increased agility and flexibility.

Growth can be accommodated by greater flexibility, which in turn will be dependent on more effective mobile IT and potentially space and infrastructure provision to support new ways of working including different ways of allocating space. A staged process to reach new norms is recommended, drawing on lessons from organisations such as the Greater London Authority (GLA), an organisation with some similarities to the Scottish Parliament.

Looking at problems in isolation makes changes less efficient and more disruptive. New workplace principles should be introduced to make it possible to respond effectively to day to day emerging needs. Emerging issues include the need to become more agile, to accommodate more people, to respond flexibly to the digital age that is liberating people from location dependence and the need to improve the meeting and collaborative opportunities in the building. Some underused spaces could be refurbished to accommodate collaborative project work.

New approaches must be introduced gradually with appropriate consultation and change management. Pilots with willing teams are recommended as a starting point. Advantage can be taken of the freedom that already exists to work flexibly, the desire for people to work more collaboratively and the potential to alter the balance of meeting spaces to workplaces.

Any additional powers for the Scottish Parliament may create a need for more people to work in the building. This can be achieved with more or different desks, or by changing the ratio of desks to people through new ways of working and a more flexible approach to space allocation and use. A modest change in the ratio, from 1 desk for 1 person to 9 desks for 10 people, will allow approximately a further 72 people to be based in the building, bringing the total capacity to 717. A ratio of 8:10 would provide a capacity of 806, and 7:10 would provide 921.

In addition there is a need for more spaces for small meetings, more appropriate rooms for larger meetings, and more spaces for inter-group projects and collaboration. Quiet rooms and collaborative spaces can be created to be shared between different groups/departments thereby providing more desk spaces as well as breaking down silos, creating lively collaborative zones in the building.

In order to meet SPCB objectives of supporting Parliament with greater effectiveness, providing a more collaborative environment, continuing the openness and transparency of the organisation, and generally increasing efficiency, it is recommended that the proposed new workspace principles are adopted and one or more groups or areas should volunteer or be selected to pilot:

- flexible desk allocation;
- provision of very small meeting booths or rooms;
- creation of an effective general collaborative space;
- improving existing meeting rooms;
- alteration of solo office ownership.

All the pilots should be well designed and documented, and publicised to other groups to demonstrate the value of new ideas and to stimulate further change. All pilots should be devised economically and designed to be sympathetic to the design principles of the existing buildings. Leadership buy-in, positive collaboration and communication with the staff will be needed to ensure that the changes are well managed and achieve a positive outcome.