

Recommended Item from Improvement Scrutiny Committee held on 7th May 2013

1150. ACCOMODATION UTILISATION POLICY

The Building and Contracts Manager presented the policy and explained that it had been written in order to create criteria for using space in a better way. Employees needed appropriate space to enable them to work properly. The unions had been consulted to ensure that the space provided for employees e.g. lunch rooms and break out areas was sufficient.

Members made comments regarding signage required in stairwells and the difficulty of conducting confidential business in open plan areas. The Building and Contracts Manager noted that there were still a few issues to be addressed at The Arc, and a meeting was to be held with the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Payroll to discuss their concerns.

Moved by Councillor J.E. Smith and seconded by Councillor R. Turner
RECOMMENDED that the Accommodation Utilisation Policy be forwarded to the Executive for approval.

(Building and Contracts Manager/Governance Manager)

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Accommodation Utilisation Policy

October 2012

This Policy addresses the following Corporate Aims (show those which are appropriate to this policy only):



Equalities Policy Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and in all the services provided to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination in compliance with its Equality Policy.

The Council also has due regard to eliminate discrimination and to proactively promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different groups when performing its functions.

Access for all

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اگر آپ کو یہ دستاویز سمجھنے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہو یا یہ بڑے حروف یا ترجمہ کی شکل میں درکار ہو تو برائے مہربانی اس صفحے کے آخر میں دیے گئے نمبر پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔



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CONTROL SHEET

Document Details	Comments / Confirmation (To be updated as the policy progresses)
Title	Accommodation Utilisation Policy
Document type – i.e. draft or final version	Final
Author of Policy	Building and Contracts Manager
Location of Policy – i.e. L-drive	
Member route for approval	Cabinet, Scrutiny and Executive
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Regeneration
Risk Assessment completed (if applicable)	
Date Equality Impact Assessment approved	November 2011
Partnership involvement (if applicable)	
Policy Approval i.e. Executive/ Council Planning Committee	
Date Approved	
Date Policy due for review (maximum three years)	October 2015
Date forwarded to Strategy and Performance (to include on Intranet and Internet if applicable to the public)	

Bolsover District Council – Accommodation Utilisation Review

1 Introduction

This document describes the methodology and standards that underpin the way Bolsover District Council will review the way it utilises current and future accommodation needs.

To implement the standards laid down in this document, there will need to be a considerable change of culture, and in order to be successful and to gain the maximum benefit from the changes, it is a culture change that will need to be driven forward by Heads of Service/Assistant Directors.

The document provides a guide to what members, employees and partners can expect from the authority's office accommodation in the future. It will also ensure that there is consistency in the standard of accommodation provided across council departments.

In some instances, the physical constraints of any individual building or the specific service requirements of an occupier may necessitate a variation from this Framework.

2 The Vision

To rationalise all the Council's office accommodation and provide a modern, flexible, cost effective and efficient workplace for use by all employees that will facilitate improved employee working conditions, improved service delivery and new working practices that bring about a change in the way the authority works.

This will be achieved by reducing the amount of administrative office accommodation the Council holds and by making the most effective and efficient use of the accommodation the Council retains. The introduction of flexible working will be the most noticeable change in the way the council works. Flexible working is the ability for an individual to work independently of and be less reliant on a single fixed base. There is no simple generic flexible working model that will fit all work situations. Rather it is a 'tool kit' of approaches which may be configured to an individual team or sections circumstances.

The objectives of the accommodation review are:

- To reduce the amount of space occupied by council operations by 40% (September 2012) and maximise revenue income of vacant accommodation.

- Reconfigure, develop, disposes of or acquire property that suits the purpose of the authority, in line with the councils corporate aims.
- To provide a range of corporately owned office facilities serviced and managed by a Corporate Facilities Management team.
- To reduce the Council's carbon footprint to the minimal level that will maintain service delivery.
- To provide a portfolio of accommodation that will support flexible working and provide staff with the facilities they need to deliver services.
- To put in to effect corporate space utilisation standards to ensure optimum and consistent use of accommodation.
- To reduce the Council's property running costs to the optimum level that will maintain service delivery.
- To minimise disruption to service delivery whilst the programme is implemented.

3 Principles Underpinning the Provision of Accommodation

Several key principles will underpin the provision of the Council's office accommodation to support the concept of shared space, collaboration and new ways of working. These key principles are detailed as follows:

- **Cost, Quality and Adaptability** - The flexibility and adaptability of the Council's office accommodation is essential in order to enable it to respond quickly and positively to changing business needs. Office accommodation will be generic and will not be excessively bespoke so as not to compromise future flexibility. Accommodation will have a consistent look and feel with a common approach to the facilities provided, space allocation and utilisation. Good design is about achieving the right balance between functionality, serviceability, maintainability, aesthetics, affordability and value for money.
- **Security and Wellbeing** - The security and wellbeing of the Council's staff is paramount, therefore full compliance with work place health and safety legislation will be incorporated in to the provision of accommodation.
- **Equality** - The Council is committed to providing its services from buildings that are accessible to and inclusive of all sections of the community that it serves and the people it employs. Where practicable, every endeavour will be made to ensure the office accommodation provided is accessible and compliant with the Equality Act 2010 requirements. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken which is employee and customer focussed.
- **Comfort, Productivity and Fitness for Purpose** - It is recognised that staff require different types of workspace to perform their jobs

effectively. Workstations, formal and informal meeting spaces, one-to-one supervision rooms, break out spaces and quiet areas will all be provided in order to optimise productivity and comfort for staff when performing their duties. Every element of the Council's office accommodation will have a purpose. This means that available space will be utilised in the most efficient and effective way to support service delivery whilst maintaining environmental comfort and ease of use for staff and service users.

- **Sustainability** - Sustainability has become and will remain a key issue for building occupiers and is therefore fundamental to this Framework. The incorporation of sustainable objectives and practices in to the provision of the Council's accommodation will deliver a healthy, productive and ecologically sustainable workplace with reduced environmental risks.
- **Signage** - Clear and effective signage will play an important role in distinguishing the different visitor areas and staff work spaces within a building. It will also ensure building users can navigate their way around the Council's accommodation.
- **Value for Money** - Achieving the vision set out in this document will require a choice of products and solutions which offer the best combination of value for money and quality of performance.
- **Better Customer Experience** - The reduction in the amount of accommodation the Council uses will be the most visible message to customers that we are changing.
- **Communication** – Clear, open, transparent two way lines of communication to be maintained throughout the process.

4 Welfare Facilities

The Council recognises the importance of providing facilities that meet the welfare needs of their employees. Welfare facilities are those that are necessary for the well-being of employees, such as washing, toilet, rest and changing facilities, and somewhere clean to eat and drink during breaks. Where practicable the Council will provide facilities that exceed minimum requirements. An Equality Impact Assessment will identify any equality-related needs with regard to these facilities.

The provision of further welfare facilities such as rest facilities, in the form of break out spaces, rest room, first aid/occupational health room, showers and multi faith prayer room will be determined on a building by building basis, to comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

5 Buildings

- **New Buildings** - This category of buildings covers any new buildings that are required to achieve the vision. They will be high quality sustainable buildings in suitable locations, which will provide both functionality and flexibility and will create a stimulating environment which will encourage creativity, enhance communication and portray a dynamic organisation.
- **Retained Buildings** - This category of building relates to buildings that are assessed as being currently or potentially well performing and fit for purpose and in the correct location to support the delivery of services. Retained buildings will be invested in so that they provide good quality working environments in full compliance with statutory provisions. They will be provided with infrastructure capable of supporting an adaptable and flexible environment. The existing constraints of the building will influence the layout although principles of good design will be applied wherever possible.

Disposals - This category of building covers buildings that are assessed as being poorly performing and unfit for purpose or that provide a redevelopment opportunity, this will be dealt with within the Asset Management Plan.

6 Flexible Working

Flexible working requires collaboration between property and infrastructure, people and service needs. It is about delivering the best services to our customers, creating a better environment for our staff and service users whilst reducing the overall costs of property to the Council. Work is what you do and not a place to which you go. The authority has determined that its employees can be categorised into 5 different classes.

Every member of staff will be assigned one of the 5 worker profiles by their department. This information will be used to determine the number of workstations a service or department will be allocated together with the ICT equipment a worker will receive. The 5 worker profiles are defined as follows:

- **Fixed Office Worker** - An employee whose job requires them to be based in the same council building for the full contractual hours of their post. These people are tied to one particular office and cannot usually work remotely or from home.
- **Flexible Worker** - An employee whose job requires them to be based at the same base for a large proportion of their time but who is able to work from other bases or from home on occasion.
- **Mobile Worker** - An employee whose job requires them to be away from their nominated office base for the majority of their time. When not

at their nominated base they could be working from other council sites, working at home, visiting service users or visiting the offices of other organisations.

- **Field Worker** - An employee whose job requires them to work out in the field for at least 90% of their contracted hours.
- **Home Worker** - An employee who works at home for the full contractual hours of their post, where their work type allows and where they have the support and agreement of their manager. The post holder is required to attend council offices for team meetings, appraisals, training and other events, as and when required by their manager.

7 Work Space Allocation

Space will be allocated on the basis of business need. The amount of space provided to a particular service or department will depend on the worker profiles of the staff based in that service or department. Space will be allocated on an average of 5-7m² per workstation maximum, excluding shared meeting, ancillary and social space. All space will be allocated in order to comply with any building related or health and safety legislation. In the first instance workstations will be allocated in accordance with the following ratios:

Worker profile	Workstation Ratio (Staff : Workstation)
Fixed Office Worker	1:1
Flexible Worker	3:2
Mobile Worker	2:1
Field Worker	10:1
Home Worker	0:0

These ratios may reduce down further to comply with the business needs of the Council if required. Wherever possible there will be no cellular offices. The use of any cellular offices will be considered for either operational reasons or because of restrictive building layouts. However, approval for cellular offices must be obtained from Senior Management Team through a fully costed business case. Building alterations will not be undertaken to create open plan accommodation other than where this provides additional workstations at economic rates. To effectively introduce flexible working, it will be necessary to provide different types of work space and building facilities. The different types of work space can be used by staff to perform different elements of their duties in the most effective way. An average full time employee spends approximately one fifth of their time awake working. A variety of improved work spaces will provide staff with a better environment in which to spend

their working time, resulting in increased productivity, a better customer experience and improved staff morale.

8 Additional Work Space

The average allocation of these different types of workspace will be as follows:

Type of Space	Ration per number of FTEs
Break Out Space	1 per 125 FTEs
Quiet/Private Space	1 per 50 FTEs
Formal Meeting Space - large	1 per 125 FTEs
Formal Meeting Space - small	1 per 125 FTEs
One to One Supervision Space	1 per 25 FTEs where required
Touch Down Space	Either 3:2, 2:1 or 10:1 staff to workstation ratio depending on the worker profile (see above)
Storage Space	Please refer to section 11

It must however be appreciated that the physical constraints of any individual building or the specific service requirements of an occupier may necessitate a variation from these standards. The definition of the various workspaces are:

Team Space - Workstation space will be allocated to optimise team dynamics enabling staff to engage and collaborate with colleagues when working from a particular building.

Break Out Space - Break out space takes the form of a small area with soft furnishings that can be used for rest and relaxation, informal meetings or alternative work space.

Quiet/Private Space - Areas designated as quiet space are areas to use when high levels of concentration or confidentiality are required. These spaces can also be used as - one to one supervision spaces.

Meeting Space - The density required on the working floors is intended for comfortable work and efficient space utilisation, but not to facilitate people holding meetings at workstations. It will therefore be necessary to provide space for meeting facilities. This meeting space can take the form of:

- **Formal Meeting Space** – Meeting rooms will range from large conference rooms to rooms for 4 - 6 people.
- **One-to-one Supervision Space** – Formal small meeting rooms designed for confidential one to one meetings. All formal meeting space will be bookable via a central electronic booking system and not specifically allocated to any particular department or service.
- **Touchdown Space** - The provision of workstations where flexible, mobile or field workers can touchdown and connect to the Council's ICT network. These will be located in corporate buildings, some of which will be located in local front line service delivery properties. These spaces are intended to minimise travel requirements by allowing staff to work in locations closer to their own homes or site visits and meeting venues.

9 Furniture Profiles

In order to achieve the most efficient and effective use of the Council's office accommodation, whilst maintaining service provision, a standard desk size and shape should be adhered to. A 1400mm rectangular workstation offers staff sufficient desk top area to perform their duties in a satisfactory manner and hence is to be adopted as the standard workstation type. The rectangular shape enables greater flexibility in accommodation layout over other shaped workstations. It is acknowledged that the authority already owns a great number of good quality curved desks that need to be utilised during this process. Therefore, in the future all new or replacement desks will be ordered in line with the table below.

The standard furniture allocation for each worker profile is as follows:

Worker profile	Worker Profile Furniture Allocation
Fixed Office Worker	Sole use of 1600mm rectangular desk, fully adjustable chair and under desk pedestal.
Flexible Worker	Shared use of 1600mm rectangular desk, fully adjustable chair and access to lockers.
Mobile Worker	Shared use of 1600mm rectangular desk, fully adjustable chair and access to lockers.
Field Worker	Access to hot-desk with fully adjustable chair and access to lockers.
Home Worker	In accordance with the Council's home-working policy.

Desk top screens will not be provided as standard as screens tend to result in individual work spaces being personalised and becoming unsuitable for flexible working. Acoustic screens will only be provided where a service presents a justified and fully costed business case or where there is a disability-related need. Under desk pedestals will not be issued to employees unless they are classed as a fixed office worker. This will ensure that shared workstations are not personalised or monopolised by individuals and are available for use by more than one employee.

Access to storage lockers will be available to those employees who do not have an under desk pedestal. These lockers can be used to store personal items and will be lockable.

Any shelving provided for the storage of files and paperwork that cannot be stored on the Council’s electronic document records management system will normally be free standing rather than wall mounted to maintain the flexibility of the space. In addition to lockers, flexible workers will be provided with mobile storage solutions to assist them with transporting ICT equipment, paper documents and personal possessions (appropriate equipment to be assessed by Heads of Service on a case by case basis).

10 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The Council will actively encourage flexible working by the provision of the most appropriate equipment to enable modern working methods to ensure the best outcomes for the Council and the individual. All Council office accommodation will be provided with the infrastructure to enable staff to access the Council’s ICT networks.

ICT Equipment

In order to ensure consistency across the county, standard ICT equipment profiles have been allocated to the worker profiles as follows:

Worker Profile	IT Profile	Telephony Profile
Fixed Office Worker	Desktop PC	IP telephone per desk
Flexible Worker	Shared Desktop PC or laptop	IP Telephone per desk/ optional mobile phone
Mobile Worker	Shared Desktop PC or laptop/smartphone	IP telephone per desk/mobile phone
Field Worker	Shared desktop PC or laptop/smartphone	IP telephone per desk/ mobile or smart phone
Home Worker	Desktop PC optional printer optional – Mangers approval required	IP telephone or mobile phone

The technical solutions identified above are options which will be utilised as required on a case by case basis to ensure cost effective working solutions. It is recognised that there will be instances where specialised equipment or software is required. Any request for equipment outside the standard specification will be considered on its own merit.

When allocating ICT equipment to staff, consideration must be given to the degree of flexibility they will require. Where desktop PC's are allocated for use by flexible workers, they will be installed with all the required software to enable full flexibility. In order to maximise the Council's sustainability credentials, a further consideration when allocating ICT must be the energy efficiency of the equipment issued. However, this needs to be balanced against the cost of purchasing and maintaining the equipment over its expected life.

11 Storage

The provision of on-floor storage will be greatly reduced and will be limited to a maximum of 600 linear millimetres per person for business papers and case files in addition to the locker or under-desk pedestal allocated. Exceptionally, additional on-floor storage may be provided to meet proven operational requirements. High capacity storage may need to be provided for certain services. These storage requirements will be considered in consultation with the relevant department and housed in areas of that are not deemed suitable for the location of workstations. In some cases high capacity storage areas could be removed if an appropriate cost effective electronic storage solution is suitable.

12 Human Resource Issues

- Support arrangements to facilitate the work of the project through advice on implementation of different ways of work.
- Reviewing the Council's Guidance and Policies on Work Life Balance to support the project.
- To advise on the need for contractual changes, for example where an employee becomes a contracted home worker under the Working at Home Policy.
- To assist the Regeneration Department with communication issues, alongside the Council's Communications Officer