Warwickshire County Council Office Accommodation Standards

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Warwickshire County Council

Working for Warwickshire

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Sign Off

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PRP Programme Board	March 2013
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Warwickshire County Council
Office Accommodation Standards

1. Table of Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. **Purpose of this document**

1.1.1. These Office Accommodation Standards set the benchmark for the way our offices support the working of Warwickshire County Council. The policy is one of a series of operational and tactical documents that support delivery of the overall Corporate Property Strategy.

Corporate Property Strategy

MFW Strategy	Asset Management Planning Guidance	Housing Policy	Community Asset Managment Policy	Maintenance Policy	Fire Policy	Asbestos Policy	Water Hygiene Policy

Corporate Asset Management	Property Rationalisation	Office Accomodation Standards	MFW - Employee Guide	Surplus Property Protocol	Premises Managers Guide

1.1.2. The standards define the principles for the design and space planning for all WCC offices. Aimed at all those staff involved in the process of setting up new or reconfiguring offices, but they will be of interest to all staff.

1.1.3. These standards provide a consistent, equitable approach to office accommodation provision, across WCC.

1.2. **Positioning**
General

1.2.1. These standards have been determined through reference to good practice. At all times we will comply with the standards required by The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations, and have due regard to all other Health & Safety and workplace legislation and good practice. We will ensure that we comply with The Equality Act and where necessary make reasonable adjustments to accommodate individual's particular requirements as identified by occupational health, access to work or through specific Risk Assessments.

1.2.2. The Corporate Property strategy, forms part of the overall Corporate Business plan. As such will when changing offices to these standards, property projects will be mindful of Corporate Goals:
- One Front Door
- Localisation
- Sustainability of WCC Property
- Supporting growth

Property Rationalisation Programme

1.2.3. The guidelines have been developed in accordance with WCC's need to use office space more effectively and the reduction of overall property costs.

1.2.4. Property Rationalisation is a major deliverable of the Corporate Property Strategy. The project will:

> "ensure that we hold the right property in the right place for the right purpose and that we minimise the operational costs of our asset base"

1.2.5. As part of this project all major administrative buildings will be reviewed, and where cost effective reconfigured to these new standards, as and when budgets allow.

1.2.6. A dedicated programme team has been set up to deliver PRP, ensuring focus in the delivery of these savings from the physical assets cost base.

Modern & Flexible working

1.2.7. We will achieve property solutions which encourage modern and flexible forms of working:

- by providing office accommodation which is predominantly open plan, efficiently used space with limited numbers of dedicated workstations, shared working spaces and high levels of hot desking.

- by embracing ICT developments which enable staff to work in any of WCC offices; such as electronic data management, use of mobile devices, standard desk configuration, Wi-Fi, hot desk phones, etc.

1.3. **Management Responsibilities**

1.3.1. These standards provide the principles of how offices will be designed, based on the principles of how we work. Physical Assets are responsible for the provision of the office environment.

1.3.2. On a day to day basis it is the responsibility of all managers / team leaders to ensure that their office works within the principles laid down in this document. In particular managers / team leaders should ensure that:
- Clear desk policy is enforced.
- Desks are used flexibly, by their own team and others.
- Staff share desks and team space for the benefit of all.
- The team works paper-lite, regularly reviewing paper file storage in line with WCC best practice.

1.4. **Governance**

1.4.1. The standards were developed in 2008 and are being refreshed in 2013 as part of a review of all corporate frameworks. They will be refreshed again in 2015.

1.5. **Definitions**

1.5.1. For the purposes of this document 'Building' will refer to the building itself, 'Offices' will refer to the main administrative working areas and 'Service Delivery Points' will mean any areas where services are provided for the public.

1.5.2. There are a number of occasions where Service Delivery Points are required above and beyond general office spaces to deliver the business of groups, such as Family Assessment Facilities or Libraries. In these cases the office accommodation standards will apply only to office working areas.

2. Buildings

2.1.1. The Councils buildings are of varying, styles quality and age. These differences will mean that there will inevitably variances in how they will be occupied and utilised.

2.1.2. These standards also recognise that there will not be exact parity between buildings. The accommodation will be the best that can be achieved, with the resources available, ensuring that all office buildings from which we operate are fit for purpose and provide a reasonable environment for staff to operate from.

2.1.3. Offices will be planned in such a way as to provide maximum flexibility in how the space can be used. Generic layouts will be used wherever possible, creating an environment which allows Business Units to change, without the need for expensive reconfiguration of furniture or IT infrastructure.

2.1.4. Wherever possible we will move to an open plan layout. This will include adapting cellular accommodation to open plan, to the extent this is physically and financially viable.

3. The way you work

3.1.1.   The design of our offices is based on certain assumptions about how we work in the space provided. For the purpose of these standards it is expected that all teams will be practicing (or moving towards) Modern & Flexible Working: sharing office space, working paper-lite and exploiting IT for maximum flexibility.

3.2.   **Job Roles**

3.2.1.   The Corporate Flexible Working Policy identifies a number of models as to how staff can work in relation to both location and time flexibility.

It is for each manager to agree the job roles for each of the roles in their area (it is not the member of staff that is classified – it's the job that they perform). For space planning purposes these job roles will be used to calculate the space required for each team. The definition of role types are as follows:

Fixed Desk Worker:

3.2.2.   A fixed desk worker is someone who has to work at a fixed desk for all of their working hours. This may be because of equality/disability issues (e.g. height adjustable desk), specific software on PC or due to a specific role.

e.g. a receptionist,

Office Worker:

3.2.3.   An office worker is someone who is based in the same location for all of their working hours but may share office space/workstations within a team location in that building.

e.g. administrative support role, payroll officer,

Flexible Worker

3.2.4.   A flexible worker is someone who **CAN** work from a variety of locations for all or part of their working hours in agreement with their manager. For instance they may be able to work from any workstation within WCC, partner's offices, home on an informal basis, hot desking or out in the field.

e.g. all other roles.

3.3.   **Records Management**

3.3.1. The provision of office space is expensive. As a matter of principle we should not be using prime office space to store paper. It is a working assumption that all teams will operate best practice for record keeping, which will minimise paper records that need to be stored in offices, all teams working "Paper-lite".

Office space for records / resources, where there it is justified for operational reasons. (Lack of good practice for the maintenance of records, will not justify the provision of additional floor space).

3.3.2. For the purpose of these standards it is expected that all teams will be:
- Making full use of the Records Management Service for all documents which need to be retained for legal, audit and business needs, but do not need to be regularly accessed.
- Undertaking regular housekeeping exercises.
- Making full use of electronic storage

3.3.3. The Records Management Service (RMS) will work with teams to give advice and support on how to better manage their records with the aim of minimising the number of paper files. For more information refer to the Records Management Pages on the intranet.

3.3.4. As an organisation we will move to 'reduced and shared' storage wherever possible to create central, preferably electronic, team filing systems where shared information is located in one area with appropriate access, security rights and processes in place.

4. Clear Desk Policy

4.1.1.   WCC operates a clear desk policy. "Clear Desk" supports flexible working arrangements, ensures compliance with our information security obligations and portrays a professional business image to those who visit our offices.

4.1.2.   It is the personal responsibility of all staff to adhere to the Clear Desk Policy. It is the responsibly of all Managers / Team leaders to ensure that staff adhere to the policy within their team zones.

4.1.3.   This policy applies to :
- All Employees
- All contractors, partners or other individuals who use WCC offices.
- All councillors

4.1.4.   At the end of each day and/or when staff are out of the office for extended period, desks must be cleared. (It is expected that staff will use a common sense approach, so that if desk is not going to be used for more than 2 /3 hours it should be cleared to make the position available for someone else to use). This applies to all staff irrelevant of their defined office role (Fixed, Office, Flexible).

4.1.5.   Confidential information or information containing personal data must always be securely stored.

4.1.6.   Put any paperwork that you no longer need in your rubbish/recycling bin on a daily basis. Paperwork that you do need should be acted upon and then appropriately filed.

4.1.7.   When printing out information, it should be cleared from printers immediately, particularly if the information is confidential or contains personal data. Faxes should also be taken from the fax machine immediately. Documentation should not be left lying around on printers, photocopiers or fax machines at the end of the working day.

4.1.8.   The floor space around your desk and work area should remain tidy and free from obstructions at all times.

5. Space Planning Standards

5.1.   Principles

5.1.1.   Offices will be planned in a generic manner to suit the Council's way of working. Appropriate furniture will be utilised to maximise the use of available space.

5.1.2.   The amount of space required by any individual Service will depend on the role and nature of work of those staff. The Property Team will work with Services to understand their work and using these standards assign a suitable number of desks.

5.1.3.   Office layouts will be planned to make best use of space available and will therefore vary between locations, and in some cases between floors.

5.1.4.   Layouts will be flexible and generic, to minimise the need for incurring costs as the size and shapes of teams change.

5.1.5.   All furniture will be supplied corporately by Physical Assets.

5.1.6.   These principles apply to the design of open plan office spaces. Requirements for other facilities (security, kitchens, toilets, etc.) are defined and incorporated into design for construction / refurbishment, ensuring compliance with building regulations and Health & Safety regulations.

5.1.7.   Office designs and space planning, will comply with any statutory regulations that are in force.

5.2. Team Zones

5.2.1. All desks will be "hot desks", a shared corporate resource, for use by any member of staff.

5.2.2. Team zones will provide a location, from which teams will normally operate from, where storage is located, providing team continuity. It is expected that teams will seek to maximise the use of hot desking within their allocated space and make vacant desks available to neighbouring zone teams.

5.2.3. Team zones are not exclusive to the team. The concept of a "team zone" is based on the assumption that with meetings, part time working, flexible working, leave and sickness, there is rarely a time where all workstations in a building will be occupied. If a higher than average number of staff are in the office at any one time, staff will be encouraged to work from neighbouring zones or shared building hot desks.

5.3. Offices

5.3.1. Offices will be provided for Directors and Heads of Service only.

5.4. Design

Meeting Rooms

5.4.1. Meetings rooms will be provided in each administrative building. The number and size of these rooms will vary according to location, and the needs of the Services in occupation.

An assessment of meeting room requirements will be made when buildings are acquired or refurbished.

Where the building allows, provision will be made for small non bookable rooms / pods will be created to allow for impromptu confidential conversations / phone calls.

Breakout Spaces

5.4.2. Breakout spaces will be provided as staff rest areas for use at lunchtime.

Throughout the rest of the day they can be used for small non-confidential meetings. These spaces are not bookable. The number of these spaces will depend on the size of the office and requirements of the users.

Kitchen Areas

5.4.3. Kitchens or kitchen areas will be provided is all offices. These areas will be fitted out with; cupboards, fridges, microwaves and hot water boilers.

Resource Areas / rooms

5.4.4. Each office / area will have access to a resource area. The resource area will have a multifunction printer/copier and will be where teams can store any shared resources such as stationery and have team post trays.

Hot desk / Touchdown Areas

5.4.5. All offices will have a hot desk area. Different from a team zone the hot desk area will not be allocated to any teams but can be used by any colleague to work from for part or all of the day – even if they are not based at this office. See the intranet for a full list of available spaces.

Quiet Zones

5.4.6. Quiet work zones will be created (where it is practical to do so). These zones will feature:

- Hot desks / benches (Wi-Fi & network access)
- non bookable workspaces
- No phone provision (and mobiles will be "banned")

General

5.4.7. Provision will be made (where practical) for:

- Waste & recycling
- Changing / Shower facilities
- Cycle Racks
- Prayer rooms

5.5. Colour schemes

5.5.1. We will continue to move towards consistent colour schemes where new furniture or redecoration is required. Paint, fabrics and carpets will be chosen to match into other areas of the building.

6. Assessing Requirements

6.1. Desks

6.1.1. To assess the number of desks required for each business unit / team on the following basis:

   a) Staff numbers on FTE basis (number of hours worked in a week, ignoring impact of any term time only contracts).
   b) The category of each job role – see section 3.2
   c) A ratio desks to FTE of:

Role Type	Ratio
Fixed Worker	1.00
Office Worker	0.90
Flexible Worker	0.70

   d) Team working patterns – Where teams have a specific pattern of working (e.g. duty teams, field based teams, etc.), the calculated number of desks will be adjusted to suit.

6.2. Storage

6.2.1. Storing paper in office space is an expensive use of resource. Assessment of storage space is based on the understanding that teams understand their storage needs, the most appropriate place for that to be held.

   Storage will be allocated in 3 different ways:

   ### Team storage
6.2.2. Minimum Allocation: Team storage is storage that is used by all members of the team such as case files or project folders. Space will be allocated to teams based on a target of 2 linear meters per workstation and will be close to the team zone to give immediate access to active/live files.

6.2.3. Additional Storage: Additional team paper / non paper storage will only be allocated if there is a clear business requirement. The need for additional storage will be assessed as part of the space planning process.

6.2.4. The main storage for each team will be a set of Tambour Units. The number of these will depend on how many desks the team have been issued with. The tambour units can have different types of filling from fixed shelves, to filing frames and pull out filing draws. How the team choose to share these between the team will left to the team to decide.

   ### Detached Storage
6.2.5. It is not always necessary or possible to store everything in the office and as a result we will allocate detached storage for non-paper records (e.g. equipment and resource materials) to your team if it is required. Suitable areas include warehouses, basements or specific storage areas or rooms.

   Records Management is the default place to store records you need to retain but don't need regular access to, rather than expensive office space.

Personal Storage

6.2.6. It is also recognised that colleagues have a requirement for some personal storage associated with their current work and any personal items they may need in the office.

6.2.7. Personal lockable storage facility will be provided for each person based at the location. The general rule will be that personal storage will be large enough to fit a laptop bag, handbag or briefcase and limited personal items. The allowance of personal storage will vary between offices depending on the type of furniture in each office.

6.2.8. Managers / Team leaders will be supplied with secure storage that can be used for staff / confidential files.

7. Furniture

7.1.1.   These standards will be used as a guide only. The configuration of some buildings may mean that the "standard" might not work effectively. In these cases offices will be planned with the most appropriate furniture. Likewise, existing furniture that is not "standard" will only be replaced where there is business benefit in doing so.

Health Requirements
7.1.2.   If any member of staff has a prescribed occupational health requirement for their workstation, furniture will be provided to meet these needs.

Desks
7.1.3.   Each standard desk will be a 1600mm x 800mm desk in Oak finish. All desks will be fitted with cable management trays, power bars plus desk mounted double power socket and where desks are back to back, low level screens.

Chairs
7.1.4.   Where chairs are being provided or replaced as part of the scheme, the "Cambridge" chair will be supplied. The chair has 7 adjustable features (arms up/down, arms in/out use, seat depth, seat height, seat angle, back angle and pump lumber support), This chair has been selected and approved by WCC Health and Safety and will support the majority of users due to the number of adjustments on it.

Coat Storage
7.1.5.   Provision will be made in all office areas to coats, umbrellas, motorcycle helmets, etc.

Bespoke items
7.1.6.   To meet the requirements of different services there may be a need for bespoke solutions. Items such as touchdown benches, collating desks, high density storage systems, assessment space and therapeutic rooms will be assessed on a team by team, building by building basis.

8. ICT

8.1. Principles

8.1.1. The design and use of our office space is intrinsically linked to ICT. Information Assets and Physical Assets work together, to deliver office accommodation that meets the needs of Services.

8.1.2. Technology will be utilised to encourage more flexible and shared use of workspaces – including:
- Wi-Fi connectivity
- "follow me" phone technology
- Multi-functional devices – for printing scanning and copying, with "follow me" printing.
- Standard desk / workstation set up

8.2. Standard desk installation
8.2.1. Each desk will be provided with:
- Keyboard
- Mouse
- 22 inch monitor (or equivalent) mounted on an adjustable swing arm.
  The swing arm will enable the user to adjust the monitor to a position to suit them.
- Hot desk phone: This is a phone you can log in and out of to enable your line to follow you around the office as required.
- Universal Dock: To enable any make of laptop or tablet users to dock into the IT facilities. The dock will give access to the keyboard, mouse, monitor and network.
- Desks with a fixed desktop style PC will be issues with an under desk mount for the PC to maximise the free space on the desk top, this will be provided in lieu of a universal dock.

1 A Standard desk set up

Telephones
8.2.2. Hot desking phones will be the standard phone to be installed on each desk.

8.2.3. Hot Desking Phones enable team members to make and receive phone calls using their own extension sitting at different desks, and in different offices. When linked with voicemail it also provides a powerful way to keep track of calls when out of the office.

Printers

8.2.4. Canon Shared Multi-Functional Devices (MFDs) will replace individual printers, scanners and photocopiers. Eventually all MFDs will be linked to ID badges ensuring that costs of printing follow the individual.   Reducing the number of peripherals reduces the amount of floor space needed, energy costs and the cost of purchasing and consumables.

Wi-Fi

8.2.5. Strategically deploy wireless internet (Wi-Fi) at locations where its presence encourages and supports more flexible working.

9. Consultation and review

9.1.1. These standards have been developed by the Property Rationalisation Team which includes specialists in office design, space planning, ICT, Modern and Flexible Working, Facilities Management and Records Management.

9.1.2. In addition, the Equality & Diversity team and the Disability Staff Network have been fully consulted on the content of this document and where appropriate amendments have been made and comments taken on board.

9.1.3. Union representatives have also been consulted as have colleagues within HR and Performance & Improvement.

9.1.4. An Equality Impact Assessment of the document has been developed and this will be reviewed periodically.

9.1.5. The standards will be reviewed biennially and amended as required.

Appendix 1: Building Management and Support

These standards define how office will be set up. The design of each office will take into consideration the need to run the office effectively on a day to day basis.

Facilities Management undertake the 'corporate landlord' role for the majority of non-school buildings, and look after the day to day operation of each building.

By managing the buildings corporately we can ensure that we operate consistent standards, tailored to the size/location of the building. This includes standards for cleaning, caretaking, post, recycling, car parking and welfare facilities.

Building user guide (BUG)
A Building User Guide (BUG) will be made available for each property which will contain detailed information on how that particular building operates and the facilities provided.

Premises Manager
Each property will also have a nominated Premises Manager from one of the occupier services.

The Premises Manager is the person who is responsible for the day to day management of the building and its occupants, including health and safety. They are not expected to be experts in all areas of premises management, but they do have a duty to ensure that services are provided in an effective and safe manner. There are systems, policies and procedures in place to support managers, including a Premises Management Guide.

Facilities Management provide:

- Cleaning
- Security
- Meeting room
- Opening times
- Out of Hours
- Access Control
- Car Park operation
- Heating & Lighting

For more information contact the Property Services Hotline.

Appendix 2: Property Rationalisation

PRP Methodology

1. To ensure that any changes to office accommodation will be successful, it is essential that the PRP Team gain an appreciation of how Services work so that appropriate workspaces can be planned.

2. In making any proposals for a change to accommodation, the PRP Team will work with Services to assist with the change process.   It remains the Service Manager's responsibility to lead and implement new ways of working arising from any accommodation changes.

3. As part of the process the responsibility for ensuring that the specific needs of disabled staff are identified and considered prior to any move resides with their line manager.

4. There will be an information gathering stage with managers. This will include interviews with managers, audits of existing office space, current paper file storage space and IT equipment, desk utilisation surveys, classification of job roles and working patterns.   This will assist the PRP Team to calculate an approximate number of workstations required by the Service at any one time.

5. PRP staff will also liaise with Health & Safety representatives for advice as and when required.

6. Managers will receive support when implementing new ways of working in their teams. All managers will have the opportunity to attend an initial MFW workshop to identify potential opportunities.   A variety of resources will be available on the intranet, along with specialist expertise such as Health & Safety, HR, Change Management, Training and IT.

PRP Help and Support

7. The Property Rationalisation Programme has an intranet site on which there is useful information on how to make these office accommodation standards work for your team. It also includes related links to Modern and Flexible Working and Records Management Intranet pages, together with contact details of Property Rationalisation Team members. Other information includes:

   - Case studies on how these standards work in practice at WCC, and on other organisations who have implemented modern and flexible working practices.
   - Frequently asked questions which tackle issues that are raised by teams as we make changes to their offices.
   - Updates on the progress of projects that are underway so colleagues can keep up to date on what is happening to the building they work in, or are moving to.

8. The ICT Service Desk can assist with technology related questions.

9. For any questions not covered on the intranet site, or use the dedicated Property Rationalisation email address prp@warwickshire.gov.uk.

Appendix 3: Asset Strategy

The role of the Asset Strategy team is **"to ensure that the County Council has the right assets, in the right place, at the right time".**

1. The Assets Strategy Team will support this objective through:
   - Challenging – how we use and why we occupy property; its purpose, its efficiency and its usefulness to service delivery and the corporate vision.
   - Championing change – by supporting Capital investment, acquisition, recycling or disposal of assets; supporting other services to identify needs, to seek funding, agree programmes of works. Through the roll-out of Modern and Flexible Working practices supported by flexible ICT.
   - Safeguarding and guardianship – by ensuring that the physical assets of the county are appropriate, safe and secure environments for all users; to agree programmes of works that maintain and improve the physical assets.
   - Enabling and facilitating service delivery – by ensuring that the physical assets of the council support its functions, reflect the needs of its customers, enable service delivery.
   - To facilitate growth by working with partner organisations to identify opportunities for investment or divestment, disposal of land for development and the rationalisation of property.

2. The Asset Strategy Team manages the review and use of all non-school assets and provides a property information function that includes:
   - Coordinating delivery of the Property Rationalisation (PR) Project;
   - Coordinating the majority of PR sub-projects;
   - Providing an efficient and effective property information and data management service;
   - Coordinating property performance management;
   - Leading and coordinating asset management liaison both within WCC and with partners

3. The team will provide a strategic lead on all property and capital related matters; to prepare and advise upon policy and strategy for provision of the service including property performance, asset management planning, capital programming, asset planning for growth, sustainable development and to develop the strategy for the property rationalisation programme.

4. The team will integrate the asset strategy with other business unit activities within Physical Assets and with the operations of other services across the Council. It will seek to maximise the effective and efficient use of the Council's property assets by collaborating with public and private sector organisations to explore opportunities to co-locate, rationalise and share services.