

Equalities Impact Analysis

SmartWorking Programme

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1. Document Change Control

Control

This document is controlled and as such should not be distributed to any parties other than the project team without the express permission of the author. Uncontrolled modification of content is prohibited; revision procedures should be followed at all times.

Revisions

Rel Date	Rev	Author	Notes
12 Feb 2008	0.1	Kate Bishop	First Draft – This document builds upon the PEIA of September 2007 that accompanied the Leaders Urgent Decision paper for funding of the mobilisation stage of this programme.
22 Feb 2008	0.2	Kate Bishop	2 nd Draft – following review with Roxana Spencer
25 Feb 2008	0.2a	Kate Bishop	Added paragraph to section 3.4 – re the car parking issue.
28 Dec 2009	0.3	Dave Bennett	Updated document to include experience from SW Phase 1 – Pilots and SW Light in Environment for submission as part of Stage C business case
31 May 2011	0.4	Andrew Richards	Updated document for submission of funding request for SmartWorking FCS project. (Cabinet Briefing 20/06/11)

2. Introduction & Scope

In February 2008 H&F Cabinet approved the selection of a developer to deliver a new Civic building (plus homes, shops etc) on the site adjacent to Hammersmith Town Hall. The development included the demolition of the existing Hammersmith Town Hall Extension to create a new public piazza in front of the Town Hall itself.

However, the economic events of autumn 2008 created a significantly altered financial landscape within which the intentions of the earlier cabinet decision have been subject to revision., specifically, the timeline for the construction of the new Civic centre. This was originally scheduled for 2012 but at the time of writing this has updated to 2015 at the earliest.

It was originally thought that the new Civic building, by itself, would not have sufficient office space to decant all H&F employees from the various large office buildings that the council currently occupies and some, but not all, of these buildings would be retained. The delay in the building of the new civic centre has afforded the the council an opportunity to focus it's attention on the existing H&F estate and, in alignment with the extant disposal plan, to examine in detail how SmartWorking can rationalise the council's use of its current buildings with the specific intention of reducing the overall accommodation footprint to release savings.

It was recognised in the planning stages of the SmartWorking programme that space and desk utilisation in H&F offices is at best sub-optimal. In addition it is all too common to find both work practice and technology combining to tie productive work to a single fixed desk location for each employee when a wide range of current technology solutions are available to help enable a much more flexible and productive approach to "doing a days work".

The SmartWorking Programme is now the principal means of identifying the necessary space optimisations that will allow H&F to realise cashable savings from our civic accommodation in the years running up to the new Civic accommodation becoming available and will optimise our subsequent occupancy and use of the new Civic campus, thereby minimising the number of additional buildings that will need to be retained. Executed well, the programme will also deliver benefits in the form of employees' motivation and productivity as well as additional service efficiencies.

"SmartWorking" is a term used for all that is involved in creating a more mobile and flexible workforce operating beyond the traditional 9-5 same-desk permanent-location means of working that is currently in place across much of the council. SmartWorking will exploit a range of "workstyle" options described in later sections of this document to deliver mutual benefits to both the council, its employees and our residents. Many H&F employees will be provided with flexible solutions that will enable them to work the way they need to in order to deliver real service improvements whilst minimising the cost to the council of its office accommodation.

Bearing in mind the scale and potential impact of the SmartWorking Programme it was agreed with the Corporate Projects Manager (Diversity and Organisational Development) that the more usual PEIA short-form would by itself be insufficient to

fully consider and predict the equalities impact across H&F. This more extensive Equalities Impact Assessment has therefore been produced to accompany the business case and Cabinet Papers for Stage C of SmartWorking programme.

This document has taken the Initial Equalities Impact Assessment done by Kate Bishop in 2007 as its starting point (see appendix) and seeks to incorporate detail and information that has been gathered by the SmartWorking Programme since its launch in September 2008 to date.

2.1 How many employees will ultimately be affected?

The original SmartWorking business case (July 2008) put forward the following summary:

- Total posts in Trent: 4800
- Total posts currently not yet in SmartWorking: 1500
- Total posts to be SmartWorked: 3300

A number of roles were deemed as not yet being within the scope of the programme. These include employees such as kitchen assistants, front of office employees such as receptionists, cashiers and librarians and employees working at places such as children's day centres – i.e. where the very nature of the role demands that the person works their fixed contract hours from a designated permanent location. In the longer-term however some of the innovations introduced by the programme may well get rolled-out to these employees.

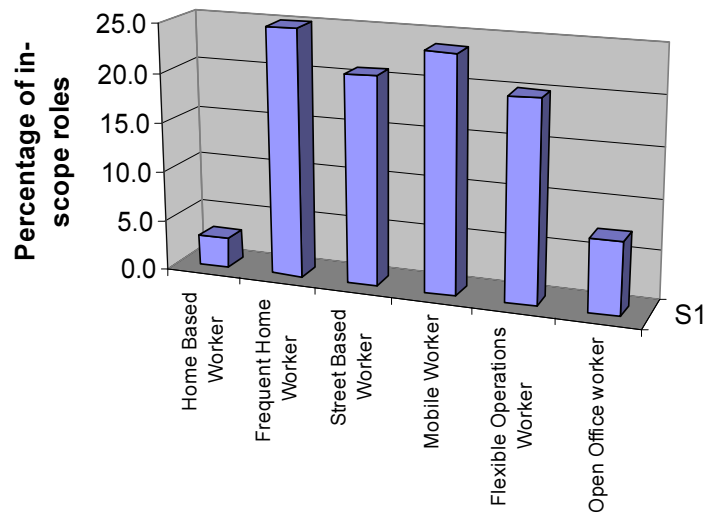
By September 2008, the programme had refined the numbers to the point that there were 2441 roles across the council in scope for SmartWorking Phase 1.

At the time of writing the corporate rollout of SmartWorking is underway across approximately 1300 staff impacted by the decant of Barclay House to be completed in July 2011. The next step will be to implement SmartWorking within FCS (circa 300 staff) and then the Housing and Regeneration department (including the former H&F Homes) at a later date.

2.2 How will these employees be expected to work in future?

The 2000 or so current roles that remain within the scope of SmartWorking have been initially mapped into 6 distinct workstyles:

- Home based worker – normally working full time from home, with only occasional visits to the office.
- Frequent home worker – 2 or more days a week working from home, remainder of time at the office or mobile.
- Street based worker – spending most of their time on the street or out and about across the borough.
- Mobile worker – works mostly out of the office but with residents, businesses or travelling.
- Flexible operations worker – mostly office based but regularly away from their desk interacting with colleagues etc.
- Fixed open office worker – spends the vast majority of their day working at their assigned desk.



2.3 The H&F Approach to rolling out SmartWorking

The programme's original aim was to have introduced SmartWorking to all of the currently considered roles in advance of the new Civic accommodation becoming available in 2012. This was to allow the closure of some office buildings in advance of the new Civic centre opening and realise some cost savings, which would in turn will offset the investment needed to implement SmartWorking.

The rollout was to be on a team by team basis with readiness consultations carried out with each team in turn along the way and this approach was to be first tested by establishing 3 pilots that would be run for a 6 month period before any major roll out was envisaged. The pilot areas were;

- Corporate Anti-Fraud Service
- Occupational Therapists
- Procurement Team

The pilots were run for between 6 and 3 months, ending in October 2009. and each pilot targeted a group of approximately 20 people..

However, in order to help make savings by letting go of the lease on Riverview House from April 2010, the programme was asked to focus on the Environment department for light touch SmartWorking in order to co-locate the whole department in Hammersmith Town Hall extension. In effect, this activity became a fourth (much larger) pilot. Information from the pilots and the Environment experience that pertains directly to this PEIA is detailed in **Section 4 – Research and Consultations Carried Out to Date.**

Underpinning this work, a SmartWorking intranet area and a SmartWorking Toolkit have been created and published. Taken together, the SmartWorking pages and Toolkit will help to mainstream the consideration of equalities impact as the programme moves forward.

3. Initial Equality Impact Assessment

This assessment will be carried out using an “equalities matrix” approach. Please see Section 3.2 where a matrix has been plotted to identify disproportionate impact on any of the considered employees and customer equalities groups (i.e. race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, belief systems) arising from any of the 6 workstyles proposed in Section 2.2.

The workstyles are plotted on the left hand side column of the matrix and the 6 considered groups are identified across the top row. The cells of the matrix are filled as follows:

- “P” indicates a potential positive impact that could benefit the particular group
- “U” indicates a potential impact that is currently uncertain and will require further discussions / consultations (either with individuals or groups) to obtain clarification on its likelihood and/or effect.
- “N” indicates a potential negative impact that, without mitigation, would adversely affect the group
- “-“ i.e. a blank cell in any part of the matrix indicates no specific impact (either positive or negative) is anticipated.

On a row by row basis each Positive, Negative or Uncertain impact is then discussed in the matrix notes that follow in Section 3.3.

Finally Section 3.4 discusses the anticipated overall impact (positive and negative) of implementing SmartWorking on all employees and customers, irrespective of which of the equalities groups they fall within.

3.1 The Equalities Matrix for SmartWorking

		Race	Disability	Gender	Sexual Orientation	Age	Belief Systems
3.3.1	Home Based Worker	-	P	U	-	P	P
3.3.2	Frequent Home Worker	-	P	U	-	P	P
3.3.3	Street Based Worker	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.3.4	Mobile Worker	P	U	P	P	P	P
3.3.5	Flexible Operations Worker	-	U	-	-	-	-
3.3.6	Fixed Open Office Worker	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.2 Matrix Notes

3.2.1 Impact of Home Based Worker workstyle

A Home Based worker normally works full time from home, with only rare occasional visits to the office. They will be provided with the equipment they need whilst working from home and will not have a desk allocated to them in the office but will make use

of a hot desk on their infrequent visits to the office. To date, the programme has not established any individual in a full home working capacity so currently has no evidence to confirm or refute the following assumptions but still considers them to be sound.

The impact on employees whose roles could be migrated to this workstyle may include:

- Positive impact on employees that have a progressively degenerating disability. Home based working may help them to be able to defer having to take early retirement due to ill-health.
- Positive impact on employees with a non-degenerating disability. Home based working may help some individuals to better manage their disability.
- Positive impact on employees recovering from serious illnesses / accidents – including those that might be regarded as having a temporary disability. The ability to work full-time from home (for at least a limited period) may help some of them to make a return to work (and full pay) sooner than might otherwise have been possible.
- Positive impact on recruiting employees with disabilities - i.e. where insurmountable issues in regularly travelling between home and the office may have prohibited them from applying for work at H&F.
- Positive impact on employees approaching retirement - some employees may choose to work longer if they are able to work from home, so enabling the council to retain knowledge and skills for longer.
- Positive impact on belief systems through increased flexibility to meet the requirements of a particular religion or belief – i.e. prayer times, fasting, attendance at group worship etc.
- Uncertain impact on gender – whilst we anticipate that many people would welcome the opportunity to become home based workers there may well be some whose personal circumstances may not make home working an appropriate option. This could be, but is not necessarily gender based. The readiness consultation that will be conducted prior to migrating people to this workstyle will be sensitive to these kinds of issues and not force an individual into a workstyle that is counter-productive for both them and the council.

Note: it is unlikely, at least in the short to medium term, that H&F will be able to offer home based working to trainee employees – hence the question of impact on (largely) very young people of the implementation of this workstyle simply does not arise.

3.2.2 Impact of Frequent Home Worker workstyle

The definition of a frequent home worker (FHW) is someone who spends 2 or more days per week working from home with the remainder of their time spent at the office, attending meetings, or working remotely.

The work to date has allocated a 50% desk utilisation to an identified FHW role. The assessments have been made on a team by team basis and our experience has demonstrated that this approach is the most practical way forward. Exceptions are

being made for employees that need certain aids/adaptations to a standard workstation (perhaps because of some form of disability) and these will continue to be provided at one of the SmartWorking shared desks in their team area. The difference is that when they are not in the office the adapted workstation can be used by someone else as a standard shared desk. The programme is encouraging teams to take local responsibility for ensuring that those individuals for who a particular desk is adapted have priority use of that workstation.

The impact upon employees whose roles could be migrated to this workstyle may include:

- Positive impact on employees with a disability. Frequent Home working may help some individuals to better manage their disability.
- Positive impact on employees recovering from serious illnesses / accidents – including those that might be regarded as having a temporary disability. The ability to frequently work from home may help some of them to make a return to work (and full pay) sooner than would otherwise have been possible.
- Positive impact on recruiting employees with disabilities – i.e. where their disability does not preclude them from travelling between home and work, but is not easily managed on a 5 day a week basis.
- Positive impact on parents / those with carer responsibilities – e.g. for those people with older children who need an adult presence (rather than supervision) the additional flexibility of being able to work some of the week from home can alleviate the need for other arrangements.
- Positive impact on employees approaching retirement – i.e. in making the transition from full time employment.
- Positive impact on those seeking career advancement – in striking a better balance between their work life, their pursuit of professional / vocational qualifications and their home life.
- Positive impact on belief systems through increased flexibility to meet the requirements of a particular religion or belief – i.e. prayer times, fasting, attendance at group worship etc.
- Uncertain impact in regard to gender – whilst we now have anecdotal evidence to support the contention that the vast majority of employees will welcome the flexibility that this will give them, there are some who are unable to meet the requirements of their designated workstyles. When this occurs, the issue is dealt with by treating the individual as an “exception”

In respect of all the above categories it should be noted that the workstyle allocation is to the role and not to the individual and the evidence from experience to date shows that the circumstances of each individual will have a distinct “relativity” to the designated workstyle of their role. Our experience has show that the instances where an individual has to be exempted from the workstyle of their role are low and therefore relatively easy to accommodate within the overall workstyle profile of the team/s.

The impact on customer groups will be more fully realised as SmartWorking enables employees to be more responsive to customers at their point of need. – as well as

realising the benefits from a more highly motivated, better qualified and less stressed H&F workforce.

3.2.3 Impact of Street Based Worker workstyle

Many street based workers already work flexibly so the workstyles definition will not have a significant impact on how they work. There are a number of developments already taking place and/or planned with street based workers and although the SmartWorking programme maintains a “light touch” engagement with the projects delivering changes in these areas, ultimately the programme itself will have no responsibility for delivery. Hence in the Equalities Matrix we have not claimed any specific impact (positive or negative) on any of the groups as a result of the SmartWorking programme.

That said, the likely impact of the technology developments on employees that come within this workstyle include:

- The development of intelligent mobile solutions that enable officers involved in a number of street based processes to complete all aspects of the business process on site and update the back office remotely will positively benefit all groups by greatly reducing the number of trips to and from base that they will need to make. Furthermore the developments in this area will also aim to deliver lighter and better technology that is easier to read and use. This may be particularly positive in the case of those with disabilities.
- Developments will also consider integrating remote worker safety features – such as GPS functionality so that the location of employees is known, panic alarms and possibly timer alarms alerting back office employees if the street based worker is overdue in their reporting in etc. Such features should improve the safety and security of all street-based employees, but particularly those who because of their race, gender, sexual orientation or belief may be particularly vulnerable to attack and abuse.

Customers will benefit from the more effective delivery of the core services that these street based workers will deliver.

3.2.4 Impact of Mobile Worker workstyle

This workstyle differs from the Street Based worker workstyle in that it covers employees who are frequently out and about visiting schools, businesses, other agencies, residents in their homes etc. Traditionally workers in these groups have often tended to have an allocated desk that they return to at points during the day to write up the results of their visits and meetings.

Under SmartWorking these employees will be better equipped with technology such as lightweight laptops that will allow them to do more at the point of contact with the customer, client or task. Furthermore, instead of regularly returning to a fixed office location to receive, back up or transfer information, a number of touchdown points will be available to them across the borough. The SmartSpace that opened in September 2009 being the first of these to be realised. They will also have equipment and connectivity made available so they can complete their work at home when appropriate. They will not have a desk permanently allocated to them but will make use of a shared desk when in the office.

This approach has been piloted with the Occupation Therapist (OT) team in the later half of 2009 and produced significant tangible benefits. For more detail on those benefits please see section 4 below.

As a consequence the impact upon employees whose roles will be migrated to this workstyle include:

- Positive impact on all employees in terms of reducing the amount of travelling to and from the office that they are required to do. Employees will have much better flexibility to manage their visits more effectively, more easily fit in with client arrangements and manage personal obligations differently, which may be particularly important for faith groups in managing their work around prayer times etc. There is now evidence from the OT pilot to support this assertion. See section 4 below for the detail.
- Positive impact on all employees by being able to complete their work during the visit itself or during lengthy train journeys (e.g. on prison visits etc). At present many employees, due the lack of any other option, make handwritten notes which have to be typed up once they return to the office. This clearly is a duplication of time and effort, can also be a source of errors and is a further factor in disrupting the work / life balance of these employees. There is now evidence from the OT pilot to support this assertion. See section 4 below for the detail.
- Positive impact on all employees groups by having information available electronically. At present employees have to anticipate what information they will need and photocopy the relevant sections of case files before they leave the office. Not only is this a yet further drain on their time and work / life balance, it can also often result in essential paperwork being forgotten – perhaps resulting in the need for a return visit. It can also often involve employees having to carry heavy paperwork around – which may be particularly difficult for disabled employees. There is now evidence from the OT pilot to support this assertion. See section 4 below for the detail.
- Positive impact on employees within this workgroup that also get involved in inter-agency working. The points raised in the previous two bullet points become even more pertinent when attending offsite meetings with other agencies where the case files of a number of customers may need to be available for actions to be agreed and taken.
- Positive impact on employees within this workgroup that would appreciate an increased ability to work from a wider variety of settings. This is particularly the case for youth workers who would be able to work effectively from venues such as Youth Clubs, young people's homes, other Local Authority sites and ensure that young people's views are captured and stored accurately.
- Positive impact on all employees where the use of technology leads to a higher level of resolution of customer issues during the visit itself. The employees involved feel more empowered and their job satisfaction increases. There is now evidence from the OT pilot to support this assertion. See section 4 below for the detail.

- Uncertain impact for employees with the kind of disability that requires aids / adaptations to a standard workstation as this workstyle assumes the ability to transport and use portable equipment. The readiness consultations would identify any issues with these employees and recommend appropriate responses.

Of all the workstyles, Mobile Working has potentially the highest impact on customer groups. With less time wasted doing unnecessary travelling and administrative chores, officers should be better able to respond quickly to customer requests and demands. There is now evidence from the OT pilot to support this assertion. See section 4 below for the detail.

Mobile Workers should also have much more and better information at their fingertips when meeting the customer and may well be better placed to resolve a number of issues on the spot. The customer groups that they deal with tend to be the most vulnerable and least able to fend for themselves (e.g. young people, single parents, elderly people, disabled people, recent immigrants etc) where any slowness or uncertainty in the council's response to their needs can have a disproportionately adverse impact. There is now evidence from the OT pilot to support this assertion. See section 4 below for the detail.

3.2.5 Impact of Flexible Operations Worker workstyle

The Flexible Operations workstyle employees are generally based in-house (i.e. mostly on council premises). A Flexible Operations worker will typically on a day-to-day basis face the challenge of trying to fit in "doing work" between the many meetings that they have to attend. They will not have a desk permanently allocated to them but will make use of a shared desk when in their team area and other shared desks / touchdown points as they move about between meetings.

Employees who are migrated to this workstyle will find it easier to fit in doing work in between meetings as they will be able to use any free workstation in the vicinity of where they actually are, rather than having to return to their team area. This may help to reduce stress and slightly improve their work / life balance. There will be a perceived loss of "their" permanent desk / cellular office but with most people operating some form of SmartWorking they should quickly become acclimatised to the new working environment. With these factors in mind we consider that there will be no specific impact on most equalities groups.

A possible exception is employees with a disability:

- Uncertain impact on employees with the kind of disability that requires aids / adaptations being made to a standard workstation. Whilst the necessary aids / adaptations can be provided on one of the shared desks in their own team area, the very nature of the Flexible Operations workstyle is based on the assumption that they can use any shared desk in any location. In practice, there is a recognition that not all employees will be able to operate according to their designated workstyles. Any issue that impedes an employee working to their designated workstyle can be picked up and addressed at the readiness consultation. Please see section 4 where there are details and examples from real experience from the Environment department and the pilots.

The adoption of this workstyle will affect internal employees only and will not impact upon customer groups.

3.2.6 Impact of Fixed Open Office Worker workstyle

Fixed Open office workers will see the least change to their current workstyle in that they will be required to attend the office on a full time basis and operate from a workstation within their team work area. The main change they will experience is that unless there is an overriding issue, they are expected to use shared desks in their designated team areas. If they are assigned a fixed desk, whilst they are away from the office (e.g. on leave or due to sickness etc.) their vacant desk can be used as a shared desk. They are therefore be expected to always leave their desk in a suitable state for someone else to use in line with the council's clear desk policy.

It should be emphasised that all workstyles will be provided with telephony appropriate to their designated workstyle, enabling them to deal with their own telephone calls, so the Fixed Open office worker will not be expected to handle and redirect a number of other colleagues calls.

Hence, on an overall basis, we consider that there will be no specific impact on any of the equalities groups – be they employees or customers.

3.3 Discussion

Like most large organisations, the proportion of women and disabled employees in more junior grades is not always reflected in the more senior roles within the council. The SmartWorking programme is not expected to significantly impact upon or redress these imbalances in the workforce as the programme will (almost) exclusively be working with existing employees in their current roles and grades.

However, the additional flexibilities that SmartWorking will bring to many roles, if intelligently combined with how we recruit, train and develop people, can help to make a difference in the future. The council has already started to move away from classroom style training in its CBT-based delivery of courses such as H&F corporate induction and the presence of SmartWorking will encourage further innovations in how we deliver training and development thereby giving employees greater freedom in how and when they take advantage of these opportunities. These areas are outside of the current scope of the SmartWorking programme itself, but nevertheless will become some of the inevitable consequences that it will engender.

The initial PEIA for the programme raised a potential risk of a perception that SmartWorking mostly benefits those individuals who are already in better paid jobs. The chart in Section 2.2 shows that only some 6% of the in-scope roles would remain in a Fixed Open Office workstyle once the programme is completed, meaning the perception would be erroneous. The current programme has put in place a communications methodology that is able to provide the required information that can address the formulation and spread of such perceptions.

As SmartWorking progresses some employees may perceive some of the SmartWorking workstyles to be much more “desirable” than others and be disappointed if the readiness consultation results in their role being assigned to one of the other workstyles. Two points should initially be noted: firstly perceptions will vary from individual to individual and what is the most desirable workstyle to one person may very easily be the least desirable to another and secondly we would re-emphasise that it is the requirements of the role, rather than the post holder's preferences, that will dictate the workstyle.

As the corporate rollout progresses we will be examining whether work practices or the lack of available technology have combined to restrict teams to a particular workstyle and we will be working with teams to adopt a workstyle more suitable to their role in the council. Whilst not everyone will get the workstyle they want, we will have identified what options are appropriate for each role.

As the SmartWorking programme is rolled out, there will be a need to restrict the reliance on paper and encourage greater use of the electronic data management system (eDMS). There should also be a greater use of conferencing facilities for meetings, giving positive benefits to employees with some mobility problems or those who experience difficulty handling large amounts of paper.

The Environment departments and H&F Homes decant from Riverview House to HTHX has resulted in a reduction in council-provided free car parking spaces and, in the future, as the site of the new Civic building includes what is presently the staff car park the availability of free car parking will consequently become severely restricted. This could impact on employees with mobility problems, even with high priority given to their needs. SmartWorking workstyles will enable a clearer sense of priority for the available places and reduce any ambiguity around matching available places to the demand for them.

Finally, with the large range of properties that it current operates from the council has always faced a struggle to make the reasonable adjustments needed to ensure that all its buildings are fully DDA compliant. With a limited budget, priorities have had to be established and work on some areas has had to take precedence over other adjustments needed elsewhere. SmartWorking's impact will be to reduce the number of buildings that we occupy and as a consequence reduce the competition for the resources that are available for ensuring DDA compliance. Eventually, being purpose built, the new civic accommodation will meet (and exceed) the necessary requirements

4. Research and Consultations carried out to-date

4.1 Initial Research

One of the effects of SmartWorking will be to move managers out of their enclosed individual offices (which take up a disproportionate amount of space) into the shared open office area. Managers on the floor, in contact with their employees, should become far better attuned to the general atmosphere within the open office and be much better placed to nip in the bud any form of adverse behaviour (including any negative behaviour directed against any of the equalities groups). The issue of remote management of employees working outside of the office will be tackled as part of Organisational Development's series of initiatives on performance management, rather than as part of the SmartWorking programme but the programme will work closely with the people that are taking this work forward.

In carrying out the mobilisation phase of SmartWorking we have made very good use of the wealth of best practice data available from Project Nomad, a Centre of Excellence for mobile and flexible working in local government led by Cambridgeshire County Council. In addition to the sources identified through Project Nomad there are a number of London councils that are further along the path than h&f and have valuable experience that we have already tapped into. We have already visited Hillingdon, Ealing, Westminster and others to learn lessons from their experiences.

It is through Project Nomad that we were able to get hold of Equalities Impact Assessments done by Leeds Council (for the use of Home Working within their Benefits Assessment Service) and Barnsley Council (for the use of mobile solutions within their Regulatory Services). Copies of these assessments are embedded in the appendices of this document and have been used to inform its contents.

The Making Change Happen event in December 07 for middle managers focused upon SmartWorking. Our ideas and proposals were warmly and in many cases enthusiastically received. This was followed up with a SmartWorking survey, which together with our consultations with HR Business Partners resulted in our initial mapping of workstyles to roles in Trent.

4.2 Findings from the Pilots

As outlined above, three Smartworking Pilots were carried out between March 2009 and October 2009. These were with the Corporate Anti-Fraud Service, the CSD Occupational Therapist team and Procurement team.

4.2.1 CAFS

The majority of the CAFS officers were categorised within the Frequent Home Worker workstyle (see 3.2.2)

The pilot did not uncover any major unforeseen negative equality and diversity impacts on managers, staff or customers.

The issues that did arise were focused around physical space and equipment and the specific adaptation of desks and equipment in a desk-sharing environment. One member of this group has a raised desk and this meant that special arrangements needed to be put in place so that they were able to participate in the new desk sharing arrangement. This was not difficult to accommodate as the Smartworking mobel we piloted had sufficient inbuilt flexibility.

The managers in the section did not report any insurmountable difficulties associated with managing their officers in a flexible working environment.

With regard to customers and clients of the service there have been no reported instances of a drop in service delivery or in previous levels of contactability of officers or access to services.

With regard to the expected positive impacts of flexible working on individual members of staff. A survey of the team was carried out during the pilot and the results were very positive. Please see the embedded survey document below;



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4.2.2 Occupational Therapists

The majority of the OT officers were categorised within the Mobile Worker workstyle (see 3.2.4)

The pilot did not uncover any major unforeseen negative equality and diversity impacts on managers, staff or customers.

One officer on the team reported that there were ergonomic issues when using the tablet PC that they had been provided with as it was too heavy for that particular individual to carry around for any lengthy time period. This issue can be readily addressed by the issue of an alternative (lighter) device.

As with CAFS above, there were two people who had adapted desks and the same allowances (or exceptions) from general desk sharing were applied to address the issue.

With regard to the expected positive impacts of flexible working on individual members of staff and customers, the results from this pilot were very encouraging. For instance, the enhanced mobility that the portable devices gave to the officers showed that they were able to spend more time with clients/customers in their homes and to provide an enhanced service while there as they also now had real-time access to H&F network systems. Also, having portable devices allowed the officers to reduce the amount of time travelling from home visits back to the office in order to update records as this could now be done while travelling or on reaching home. A percentage of that time saving was directly enjoyed by the individuals themselves as they could go straight into visiting in the mornings and straight home afterwards at the days end.

4.2.3 Procurement

The data from this pilot is still being evaluated and this will be updated in due course.

4.3 Findings from the Corporate Rollout to date

The current stage of the corporate rollout is underway and is due to complete in July 2011, having enabled the decant from Barclay House. This stage of the programme has included approximately 1300 staff in Resident Services, Community Services, Children Services, Environment and Housing Options.

Issues raised to date, which are relevant to equalities include the following. They are physical/ergonomic and system-based in nature and can be addressed through the application of the most suitable technology.

- The first issue to arise has been levels of noise in an open-plan environment – This can be addressed using screens and by the application of office rules concerning noise.
- The second issue has been the need for fully adjustable monitor screens so individuals are able to use any desks in the area. This could be addressed by purchasing equipment that is fit for purpose.
- The third issue has been how to organise and monitor specially adapted chairs in a flexible working environment. This issue is currently under review as a solution

is sought but that solution is likely to be behavioural/organisational and therefore relatively unproblematic to implement.

From the perspective of the impact on service delivery to customers and client there have been no reported problems.

5. Factors that could contribute or detract from the desired outcomes

Some of the key challenges we are still working to resolve through the council-wide implementation of SmartWorking include:

- Realising the productivity benefits from SmartWorking in real financial terms.
- Demonstrating the benefits of SmartWorking quickly enough to show what is possible.
- The “Culture of Possession” – a territorial belief that space belongs to individuals & departments.
- Managers’ cultural mistrust over remote working.
- Overcoming the view that SmartWorking is only about technology.

SmartWorking are working closely with Organisational Development, Human Resources and the Accommodation programme to ensure that all these risks are successfully managed.

6. Moving Forward

The corporate rollout of SmartWorking started in July 2010 and is now well underway. As part of the approach, readiness consultations are carried out on a area by area basis to ensure that all the components needed for a successful implementation are fully in place before teams are migrated to a SmartWorking environment.

The early adopters of SmartWorking have provided the team with valuable early feedback on how well our planned approaches actually work in practice. Most importantly we have gained valuable information on any disproportionate impact and unwelcome outcomes. The seeking out of experience and lessons learned from external sources such as Project Nomad and other London councils will continue throughout the lifetime of the programme.

7. Conclusions to date

We firmly believe that the vast majority of H&F employees will welcome and grasp the flexibility and other benefits that SmartWorking will deliver. Moreover, aligned with incremental cultural changes across the organisation, the adoption of Smartworking practices will be key component in the modernisation of H&F.

In conducting this Equalities Impact Analysis we have identified a small number of issues in terms of employees with specific disabilities which will require further close attention as we move forward, but in the main our conclusion is that the overall impact of SmartWorking will be overwhelmingly positive for the vast majority of

employees and customers irrespective of which equalities group(s) they may come within.

8. Appendices

Copies (below – for reference) of the impact assessments carried out by Leeds Council for the use of Home Working within their Benefits Assessment Service and Barnsley Council for the use of mobile solutions within their Regulatory Services.



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