

Appendix 1

Impact Assessment



- 1 Assessment of: Property Change Programme
- 2 Service: Transformation & Business Services
- 3 Head of Service: Matthew Jones
- 4 Version / date of sign off by Head of Service:
- 5 Assessment carried out by (job title): Business Services Manager – Corporate Assets

1. Description of project under review

The Property Change Programme proposes the disposal for four sites in Exeter and two in Barnstaple

2. Proposal, aims and objectives, and reason for change or review

The aim of the project is to reduce Devon County Councils property portfolio without detriment to services or the local community. We are responding to our corporate priority of 'making best use of assets and buildings'.

Our statistics are showing us that post COVID, our occupancy stats in office buildings are low, with an average of 20-30% occupancy across the estate.

The disposal of these sites will generate capital receipts and annual revenue savings to support Devon County Council financial sustainability.

In addition it will reduce our carbon footprint to help us achieve our net zero target of 2030.

The Vision is to 'Reduce, Dispose, Repurpose and Transform' the authority's property portfolio to provide a sustainable estate which promotes and facilitates agile and integrated service delivery.

The key elements of the estate strategy are:

- Identifying properties that are no longer required or are not cost effective.
- Identifying the potential for co-location of services within DCC sites or public sector.
- Opportunities for better use of assets via repurposing to meet key strategic needs.
- Improving the energy efficiency of assets and reducing our carbon.

3. Risk assessment, limitations and options explored (summary)

The impacts of the strategy and the success of the recommendations in minimising those impacts will be included as questions in future staff surveys, to include various factors of feedback, including impact of both staff and customers in the community.

Estates will report regularly on the property rationalisation targets and continually review property to ensure it is being efficiently used.

Economic impacts

Positives	Impact (<i>how</i> they may be affected)	Mitigation/action required
Devon Ratepayers	helps protect need for rises in council tax by decreasing annual demand on revenue budget	
DCC Budgets	Reduces annual revenue costs and facilitates capital receipts.	
Co-located services	increased collaboration and integration across DCC teams. Provides clients with access to wider range of services	
Community Engagement	Working with partners and local community organisations to deliver	
Negatives		
DCC staff and clients may have to travel further to main work base, increasing travel costs.		The new office bases and delivery spaces for clients are all within a one mile radius of current locations

Environmental Impacts

Positive	Impact (<i>how they may be affected</i>)	Mitigation/action required
The environment	<p>The strategy facilitates the disposal of the worst performing buildings.</p> <p>The new estate will focus on fewer, far more energy efficient buildings.</p> <p>The strategy optimises the use of property, reducing the carbon footprint per employee</p>	
DCC staff	The opportunity to work from local, connected and flexible work spaces can reduce staff travel, reducing their personal carbon footprint.	
Carbon/greenhouse gas reduction	More energy efficient buildings generate fewer carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions.	
Negative		
DCC Staff and Clients	<p>If customers, clients and staff have to travel further to access/deliver services, there will be a negative impact on the environment, with a potential increase in local traffic based pollution and increase greenhouse gas emissions</p>	<p>All site moves in this programme are within a one mile radius of current location</p> <p>Promote better travel, and access to services via internet.</p> <p>Support staff to change the way they work so that travel, to, from and for work is minimised, making maximum use of available technology and</p>

		local flexible work spaces.
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Equality

This strategy has an equal impact on people of protected characteristics, including age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, religion and beliefs, sexual orientation, Trans-gender/gender identity. All have been taken into consideration when looking at the alternative office bases and service delivery spaces to not have any negative effect on any protected group.

4. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs

The people potentially affected by the proposals are principally those living or working in the Exeter and Barnstaple area. Therefore, their diversity profile is presented below, with Devon and England overall used as comparators.

Staff moves resulting from property disposals will be re-located to other Devon County County sites within a 0.5miles radius. Similarly, the communities visiting sites delivering these services will continue to access services in the same town.

Considerations have been given to ensure no groups are likely see to be significant disproportionate benefit or disbenefit by these proposals.

As shown below in Table 1, the population of Exeter is slightly younger than the national average at the 2021 Census, with the proportion aged between 20 and 64 above the national average. Barnstaple has an older than England average.

Geography	Total	% Age 0-19	% Age 20-64	% Age 65+
Exeter	130,712	23%	60%	17%
Barnstaple	43,255	21%	55%	24%
Devon	811,638	20%	54%	26%
England	56,490,045	23%	58%	18%

Younger people (aged 0-20) tend to be the main users of the services provided at the two of the buildings in Exeter and Barnstaple. Services will relocate in the same town within a short distance making them easy to reach. Furthermore, the registrars service will be used by users of all ages in Exeter, with none of the ages disproportionately affected with the service relocating to a nearby building with equal access.

Ethnicity

Exeter and Barnstaple, as with Devon as a whole, is lower in ethnic diversity than the national average (Table 2).

Geography	Total	White	Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups	Asian	Black/African Caribbean	Other Ethnic Group
Exeter	130,707	90.3%	2.5%	4.9%	0.9%	1.4%
Barnstaple	43,254	96.5%	1.2%	1.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Devon	811,642	96.4%	1.4%	1.5%	0.3%	0.5%
England	56,490,048	81%	3%	9.6%	4.2%	2.2%

All ethnic user groups will have the same opportunity to access services with no group disproportionately benefitted from these proposals.

Health and disability

The proportions of people describing themselves as being in very bad or bad health within the 3 areas were higher than the Devon and England averages, especially in Northam. This could be due to the aging population shown above.

Geography	% activities limited a little by disability	% activities limited a lot by disability	% Not disabled under the Equality Act	% Very good and good health	% Fair health	% Very bad and bad health
Exeter	11.6%	7.3%	81.1%	82.2%	12.6%	5.2%
Barnstaple				79.9%	14.1%	6%
Devon	11.1%	6.9%	82%	83.4%	12%	4.6%
England	10.2%	7.5%	82.3%	81.7%	13%	5.3%

All health and disability groups will have the same access to services, remaining on the same transport routes with equal travelling distances via foot or road. There will be suitable facilities in place to help those with disabilities accessing services.

Gender

As in England overall, there were slightly more females than males in the geographies considered here at the 2021 Census. Information about other gender identities was not collected at the 2011 Census

All genders will have the same opportunity to access services with no group disproportionately benefitted from these proposals.

Socio-economic status

Levels of deprivation are roughly the same in Exeter, Barnstaple and Devon as across the whole of England, as shown below in Table 4.

Geography	% household is not deprived in any dimension	% household is deprived in one or two dimensions	% household is deprived in three or four dimension
Devon	49.6%	47.6%	2.8%
England	48.4%	47.7%	3.9%

All households will have the same opportunity to access services with no group disproportionately benefitted from these proposals.

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

Services:

Many elements of the strategy are already being implemented as part of the ongoing office rationalisation programme. The service stakeholders involved in these moves have been actively engaged.

The key areas of concern that have been raised during this process are:

Relocation of registrars from Larkbeare House – the requirement to have a registered premises for births, deaths and marriages. This will be mitigated by allowing sufficient time to relocate and set up.

Relocation of Youth Offending Team from Ivybank – the youth attendees are familiar with this building and it provides both a good location and building to deliver services from. This will be mitigated by moving to a location within Exeter, in a nearby vicinity, ensuring the building is fit for purpose and providing various delivery options for service users to access.

Relocation of Youth Centre from St Georges Rd – the youth attendees are familiar with this building and it provides both a good location and building to deliver services from. This will be mitigated by moving to a location in close proximity, ensuring the building is fit for purpose.

Senior management:

Service directors and senior leadership team have been briefed on the strategy and any concerns and issues raised have been addressed in the final version of this document.

ICT:

The success of the property change programme is dependent on having appropriate ICT systems in place. The services are largely being relocated to DCC buildings where we already have ICT set up and/or ICT solutions have been considered as part of the plan.

HR:

The implementation of the property change programme will inevitably result in some of anxiety and insecurity for some members of management and staff as they are required to change their established working practices. The strategy has been discussed with HR and their comments have been considered, with moves very limited in terms of distance and quality of facilities provided.

Community:

The community have not been specifically included in the consultation, however, as all services are moving to buildings within very close proximity of their current location, there is a low risk of effect on the community as they will continue to receive a high level of service in the same location, with little impact on travel distances and remaining on transport routes.

6. Additional relevant research used to inform this assessment

N/a

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

Informal consultations have taken place with all staff affected by these proposals with mitigations and solutions put in place to address any concerns.

8. Equality analysis

a) Is this group negatively or potentially negatively impacted, and in what way?

- b) What could be done or has been done to remove the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage and inequalities?
- c) In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?
- d) What can be done to advance equality further? This could include meeting specific needs, ensuring equality of opportunity and access, encouraging participation, empowering people, making adjustments for disabled people and action to reduce disparities and inequalities.
- e) Is there a need to foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promote understanding) and help people to be safe and protected from harm? What can be done?

a) All residents by geographic area

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

b) Age

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

c) Disability (includes sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

d) Race and culture: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin, skin colour, religion and belief, asylum seeker and refugee status, language needs

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

e) Sex and gender identity and reassignment (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

f) Sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership if work related

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

g) Other relevant socio-economic factors and intersectionality

Once specific plans for relocation / changes have been agreed an impact assessment will be development accordingly to ensure that the Council complies with its equality obligations.

9. Human rights considerations:

People are not negatively impacted by these plans.

10. Environmental analysis

h) Devon County Council’s Environmental Review Process	
i) Planning Permission	
j) Environmental Impact Assessment	
k) Strategic Environmental Assessment	

l)

	Description of any actual or potential negative consequences and consider how to mitigate against these.	Description of any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes and consider how to improve as far as possible.
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost	N/A	The option to reuse current equipment and furniture will be the first

		<p>consideration before any purchases.</p> <p>As part of clearing out sites, we will recycle as much as possible.</p>
Conserve and enhance wildlife	<p>N/A</p> <p>Do we need to mention anything about disposal of sites and impact? I.E Matford Lane/Huts?</p>	N/A
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape	<p>N/A</p> <p>Do we need to mention specifically about Larkbeare or CH grounds?</p> <p>Any redevelopment would be subject to the relevant planning legislation.</p>	N/A
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage	N/A	N/A
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions	N/A	Reduction in the estate and releasing poor energy performing buildings will reduce emissions.
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)	N/A	N/A
Contribute to reducing water consumption		Reduction in the estate and releasing performing buildings will reduce water consumption.
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level)	N/A	N/A

m)

11. Economic analysis

	Description of any actual or potential negative consequences and consider how to mitigate against these.	Description of any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes and consider how to improve as far as possible.
Impact on knowledge & skills	N/A	Knowledge and skill sharing with wider communities and partners by sharing buildings
Impact on employment levels	N/A	Reduction in spend on buildings could allow services to direct resources at staffing costs
Impact on local business	N/A	Increased footfall in community buildings and town centre locations