

## **Transformational Change Programme: Agile Working and Estates Review Strategy**

### **Introduction**

Angus Council's Plan 2014 – 2017 sets out an 'Agile working and estates review' as one of the four key work-streams of the Transforming Angus change programme.

This strategy sets out the key objectives and design principles within which that work-stream will be implemented.

### **Angus Agile**

This strategy aims to create a sustainable property estate, improve service delivery and improve our organisational effectiveness through the successful adoption of agile working practices and workplace design.

### **Strategic objectives**

The strategic objectives of Angus Agile are:

- Enabling rationalisation of the Council's property estate.
- Increasing employee satisfaction and morale by promoting a good work-life balance.
- Improving services to customers by increasing productivity and performance.
- Significantly improve the utilisation of existing accommodation through more efficient and effective use of office spaces.

### **Why?**

Previous studies have highlighted an over provision and associated poor occupancy/use of existing Council office space. The objective to develop and implement a successful agile working strategy within Angus Council links to the council's vision of *Angus being a good place to live and work in and where our carbon footprint is reduced.*

This strategy will deliver the following benefits:

- Empowering many employees to have a higher level of personal control in delivering their work ensuring they have the right tools and systems to do their job thereby maximising their productivity, improving work-life balance and delivering the greatest value to the public.
- Productivity benefits through a reduction in lost time in the "travel to the office" before or after meetings.
- Workforce morale and motivation is increased through an improved office environment which is designed to support different and smarter ways of working, is bright and uncluttered with a clear desk policy and a variety of suitable workstation styles.
- Financial benefits through reduced accommodation and property estate costs and reduced staff travel expenditure. Potential future costs can also be avoided with a more flexible office environment that is easily adapted to suit changing service needs and demands.

- Environmental benefits can be realised via a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from reduced heating and energy consumption, plus the opportunity to reduce emissions from business mileage incurred and reduction in carbon footprint generated by the daily commute.
- Agile work practices, combined with digital processes and digital service delivery, will modernise council work practices, reduce operating costs, improve productivity and focus on outcomes.
- Greater visibility of senior managers who will work alongside their staff rather than in individual offices.

### **Examples of Agile working in other Public Sector Bodies**

The Scottish Futures Trust report that 26 of the 32 Scottish local authorities along with other public bodies have already implemented an agile and more flexible approach to their working practices. Very successfully examples have been implemented at Scottish Water and Aberdeenshire Council and Angus Council are actively learning from these organisations.

### **Making the case in Angus**

By reducing office space to an average of 5m<sup>2</sup> per workstation, coupled with an average workstation/staff ratio of 65%, there is in theory the potential for all of Forfar's 850 office based staff to be located effectively within the existing Orchardbank campus. This analysis allows for a variety of informal meeting spaces, touchdown areas and 1-1 areas and still meets busier occupancy demands. For comparison, 2014 figures show the campus has a workstation/staff ratio of 110% with over 9m<sup>2</sup> per workstation in many locations. The Agile Strategy will deliver significant improved efficiency to this situation.

It is intended that the above standard will be developed in accordance with best practice guidance to support a modern approach to the provision of office accommodation.

Although no detailed financial analysis has yet been undertaken as to which properties will be retained and how they will be used going forward, the financial savings that will be released through the effective and ambitious implementation of Agile Working are savings that can be avoided from front line services or other Council activity.

In the current challenging financial climate, a concerted and committed move to Agile Working will therefore help reduce the pressures on other Council budgets and make a significant contribution to the Council's financial sustainability. This is over and above the other productivity and workforce morale benefits that will be achieved.

The scope of the Angus Agile programme will include **all** council staff and work roles that are considered suitable for agile working. It is envisaged that this will cover approximately one third of the council's workforce.

Implementation of Angus Agile will include a detailed review of the council's property estate to determine which property assets are best suited to delivering sustainable, modern, fit for purpose office environments that support agile working. This will enable the release of surplus property in due course.

It is recognised there will be challenges and barriers that require to be overcome and managed as we implement this strategy. Affected members of our workforce may need assistance and support for the significant cultural changes required on their own journey to adopting agile working practices and associated behaviours.

Initial feedback from the pathfinder teams show that team leaders concerns have been significantly reduced through effective engagement with the process.

To facilitate this cultural change a [FAQ](#) web-page plus supportive information on guidance and policy will be provided to all staff via a new intranet page (Appendix 3 shows the current version).

## **Design Principles**

Angus Agile will be implemented within the following design principles framework:

1. An inclusive and participative process of staff engagement will underpin the implementation of Agile across all in scope teams.
2. Chief Officers and managers will lead by example and be early adopters of Angus Agile.
3. A 'clear desk' policy will be implemented across the council. Further guidance will be developed but this will include requirements that every workspace is un-personalised and clear after use, free for the next employee, thereby establishing a culture and work practices where a desk/workstation is not "owned" by an individual employee.
4. Angus Agile will be rolled out to all employees whose work role is agreed by the Angus Agile Programme Board as 'in scope'.
5. All 'in scope' roles will be categorised within one of five workstyle definitions, as detailed in Appendix 1, ensuring the workforce have the right tools and systems to enable them to do their job effectively and efficiently.
6. Traditional "managers" office spaces, where practical, will be re-provisioned as meeting rooms.
7. Records and document management practices which support agile will be developed and implemented.
8. Agile working policies will be developed, communicated effectively and implemented to support employees with the change to agile.
9. Digital technologies that facilitate agile will continue to be developed and implemented.
10. Prior to each group/team moving to agile, a cost justification exercise will be undertaken to ensure that any upfront investment delivers a suitable return within an acceptable period.

The first phase pathfinder of the Angus Agile programme is currently being implemented in Angus House and Bruce House (Appendix 2 refers). The learning from this will be evaluated by the Agile Angus Programme Board and the Design Principles amended accordingly prior to the planned roll out across the council.

Through the evaluation of the pathfinder phase, the financial and other benefits to be realised will be quantified.

## **Consultation**

Discussions have been held with the Scottish Futures Trust to draw on their experience and services in this area.

Additionally, members of the Transforming Angus Team and Communities are in discussion with Hub (East Central Scotland) to explore options and funding available to carry out a service led accommodation review across all Council service teams.

Trade Union representation will be invited onto the Angus Agile Board.

### **Timescale**

A detailed timeline will be prepared and presented to Committee in due course to include key aspects of the phased implementation of Angus Agile over the next 2 years and the implications emerging from the estates review.

It is envisaged that for some staff teams it may be a number of months before agile working is implemented within their area.

### **Conclusion**

By the adoption of a successful, scalable and well implemented agile working programme, significant financial and environmental benefits can be realised. Additionally, staff motivation; productivity benefits; reduced stress and absence levels, can also be shown to be improved with a better work life balance.

APPENDIX 1

Work Style Definitions	Office Equipment	Anticipated IT Tools	Indicative Desk : Staff Ratio
<p><b>Workstyle 1</b> - People who spend nearly all of their time working at a desk in a single office location within their “team zone”. There is a specific reason for this person to be located at a fixed point (for DDA, H&amp;S or technical purposes). This workstyle is anticipated to be relatively rare and should be seen as an exception.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own Desk (clear desk policy still applies)</li> <li>• Lockable Desk Pedestal</li> <li>• Close to limited office filing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk PC or Citrix</li> <li>• Desk phone</li> </ul>	<p>1 : 1</p>
<p><b>Workstyle 2</b> - People who spend most of their time (approximately 80%) working at a desk in a single office working adjacent to their “team zone”. These would be grouped close to team filing, and people would work within the same area on a regular basis. No requirement for out of office working exists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Desk (cleared)</li> <li>• Locker but no pedestal</li> <li>• Limited office filing at team zone</li> <li>• Council touchdown sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citrix</li> <li>• Desk phone(using Virtual Office Login)</li> </ul>	<p>8 : 10</p>
<p><b>Workstyle 3</b> - Staff who spend up to 60% working around their “team zone” at their base location. They are often at other sites e.g. other council offices or in regular meetings or are working from home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Desk (cleared)</li> <li>• Locker or storage at base location</li> <li>• Limited office filing at team zone</li> <li>• Council touchdown sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citrix or Direct Access laptop</li> <li>• Desk phone(using Virtual Office Login)</li> </ul>	<p>6 : 10</p>
<p><b>Workstyle 4</b> – as WSD3 but spend the majority (&gt;70%) of their time working in a mobile fashion only using a Council office when required e.g. for face-to-face meetings. Personal storage (locker) and printing requirements will be covered either at their designated “team zone” or at home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Desk (cleared)</li> <li>• Locker or storage at home if required</li> <li>• Limited office filing at team zone</li> <li>• Council touchdown sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct Access Laptop</li> <li>• Mobile phone (if required)</li> </ul>	<p>3 : 10</p>
<p><b>Workstyle 5</b> - People who are able to carry out most of their current work activity at home. Occasionally visit a council office (e.g. once a week) for training, meetings etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base is at home</li> <li>• Storage &amp; Printing is at home if required</li> <li>• Council touchdown sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct Access Laptop</li> <li>• Mobile phone (if required)</li> </ul>	<p>No desk, use touchdown provision</p>

In addition to the desk provision above, there will also be drop in areas for staff to work from if required

### Implementation

In support of this strategy, first phase pathfinder staff groups are relocating to Angus House, Forfar, and the lower ground floor of Bruce House in Arbroath.

To ensure the successful adoption of agile working, 1-1 meetings are being held with team leaders to ensure staff engagement and involvement in the design process (within design parameters) for office layouts, based on the specifics of the service and its purpose/outcomes. These include:

Identifying workstyle definitions for every member of staff to calculate the staff/desks ratio required for their “team zone”.

Implementing a clear desk policy ensuring every workspace is un-personalised and clear after use, free for the next employee. The desk/workstation is not “owned” by a single employee.

Adopt good document management practices and the realisation that not all paper records need to be stored at the end of the desk within prime office accommodation space.

Traditional “managers” office spaces, where practical will be re-provisioned as meeting rooms with all ‘in scope’ employees being included in the working style assessments.

Ensuring all stakeholders engage in the agile process and give staff authority to embrace these new working practices.

The Organisational Development service is reviewing support materials for employees and existing arrangements for agile and disparate teams.

HR policies are being reviewed to support all staff with these new working practices.

A frequently asked questions page is being developed to provide the workforce with responses to common questions.

Prior to each group/team moving to agile, a cost justification exercise will be undertaken to ensure that any upfront investment delivers a suitable return within an acceptable period.

## F.A.Q.'s - Agile Working and Estates Review Strategy

Should you have any questions regarding the Agile Working and Estates Review that have not been raised below, please email it to [TransformingAngus@angus.gov.uk](mailto:TransformingAngus@angus.gov.uk)

1. What if everyone is in the office at the same time?
  - *The Working Style Definitions help identify the number of desks required. Experience from other organisations shows this problem does not happen in practise. There is also likely to be more than one team in a larger office space, so the chance of all teams having everyone present is reduced. The office layout will have agile and drop in workspaces located between team zones to assist staff to locate nearby. Failing this the staff member would need to go to one of the other drop in areas.*
2. What if people can't get a meeting room?
  - *A proportionate number of meeting spaces will be provided in the office design layout. These are likely to be a mix of small 1-1 rooms, larger rooms with AV facilities, plus flexible spaces that are set aside for informal discussions and team meeting.*
3. Will there be a clean desk policy
  - *Yes, this is required for agile working to be a success.*
4. How do we deal with issues of confidentiality?
  - *Confidential meetings would still require to be held in an appropriate setting. Each location will have a mix of meeting spaces and 1-1 meeting rooms. It is possible that traditional cellular offices housing a small number of staff will be converted to small meeting rooms to ensure best use of space and provision of appropriate facilities.*
5. Where will staff store their personal belongings
  - *In an office locker if required.*
6. Is there a risk that we will lose team coherence?

- *After the working styles are completed for each team, “zones” will be identified to act as a focus for that team. Work style 1 staff will be located in this “team zone” and the others will typically be expected to locate near that hub when in the office.*
7. If staff are working in different offices how will we contact them, will they each have a mobile phone?
- *The current telephone system operated by the Council reaches most of the Council's office property estate (incl. Bruce House and the Orchardbank Campus). This system has a facility called “Virtual Office Login” which allows the member of staff to take their extension number with them regardless of which desk they sit at. This also includes voicemail and speed dial functionality thus reducing the need for mobile phones. Also I.T. is beginning to tender for an improved system which will further improve contact, location and availability issues.*
8. What about staff safety?
- *Existing HR policies are still applicable whether in an office, lone working or home working setting.*
9. Can staff work at home?
- *If staff have the appropriate tools, and their working style suits home working then yes. At present some staff already work from home (those who would fit into work-styles 3, 4 & 5).*
10. If staff work from home, will the Council pay their electricity, heating and broadband costs?
- *For work-styles 1-4 no payment would be made for electricity, heating or broadband costs. For work style 5, this is still being investigated.*
11. What about customer caller facilities?
- *Teams that require specialist customer caller facilities e.g. clinical or controlled service-user access will not be suitable for agile working and will be out-with the scope of this programme.*
12. How do we deal with members of staff with particular needs, i.e. disability?
- *The Council will continue to meet its obligations to provide reasonable adjustments for staff with particular needs. These staff*



*will be in Workstyle Definition 1 and therefore where appropriate will have a single designated desk for their use. The clear desk policy applies to all however, so their desk space can be used by others during holidays etc.*

13. How can we manage when there is a requirement for staff to be in the office at the same time? Eg. First thing in the morning (before visits are possible) or when there are team meetings etc.

- *The staff engagement process will work out, in detail, the best office configuration for numbers and types of workstations required to suit the needs of that team, providing sufficient differing work areas to maximise the best use of these spaces. In practise elsewhere, this isn't an issue.*

14. How can we prepare to support staff on return from stressful and traumatic visits (many rely on colleagues at present and knowing that there will be a 'place' to return to)?

- *During the workforce engagement process, office layout will be designed around the "team zone" where staff can return to. The office should also be laid out in a varied configuration allowing space for the "unwind" process, or a 1-1 meeting room could be booked at short notice.*

15. How can we ensure that we do not lose the capacity to share vital information within teams via inter professional discussion which often happens informally? E.g. X person was present in someone's home but through discussion it becomes evident that X is also known to another worker and necessary links are made.

- *Vital information should not be shared on an informal basis. Teams will however, normally converge to agile desks around a "team zone" where informal team information can be shared.*

16. We already have the capacity to work from home when this is desirable e.g. to write a report etc. but it would be helpful if we could access all documents from home and this could be done in a planned way.

- *Where appropriate, direct access laptops allow full functionality.*

17. What about the flexi system, can this be set-up to allow swipe in and swipe out from any of the agile locations?

- *The system will allow swipe in and swipe out as the sites are set-up for agile working.*

18. When staff work in other offices, what happens to the Fire register?

- *As at present, you are still required to sign (or tick) in and out at every building.*

19. Can individuals book meeting rooms themselves? What do you do if you need to meet at short notice?

- *Investigations are underway to allow staff to be able to book meeting facilities directly themselves online via existing tools. It is likely that specific facilities such as Meeting Rooms A, B & C at Angus House will still need to be arranged via differing procedures.*

20. What are we going to do about file storage?

- *As teams will be assessed individually there is no single answer. It is likely to be a mix of a small amount of limited storage near the team zone, digital storage where possible, with the rest in suitable spaces or indeed off-site. This will be a significant issue for some teams in the interim. For information, the [Scottish Council on Archives](#) gives advice on records retentions periods.*

21. How will the council develop a culture where workforce is comfortable working in an agile manner e.g. performance by outcome rather than being present?

- *{Still to be answered}*

22. If I chose workstyle five, do current policies still apply?

- *{Still to be answered}*

23. Is "bring your own device" BYOD possible?

- *{Still to be answered}*