Executive summary

In December 2018, the Executive Board approved the following recommendations:

a. To manage increasing demand for accommodation through scheduled home working and the implementation of more flexible workspace.

b. To engage architects Broadway Malyan to update the 3HS workplace audit and produce the same for London in June 2019.

c. To engage property consultants to review London and Manchester property options prior to the 2020 budget setting process.

d. To reconfigure the reception and meeting room area in London to provide more flexible workspace.

This paper presents an overview of progress so far and additional areas of work we’ve been focussing on, including plans for developing the London office workspace to be considered.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- Consider the plans to reconfigure the London office space.
Scheduled home working

1. Data presented in the December paper illustrated that the number of people in the office in London and 3 Hardman Street varies significantly on different days of the week.

2. Since then, we’ve worked with our colleagues in QA&CI to set up a focus group with representatives from each directorate to understand the challenges of evening out scheduled home working days and how some teams have overcome those challenges.

3. We’ll develop and publish guidance based on feedback from the focus group to encourage all areas of the business to make a concerted effort to even out home working days to promote efficient use of our office space.

4. We continue to monitor occupancy data and work with teams that currently work from home one day a week to explore opportunities to work from home 2 days a week.

5. Only if we find that we need to generate further desk capacity once these steps have been taken, we’ll then consider options for teams to work from home 3 days a week.

6. We have been able to provide an additional 58 desk spaces at 3 Hardman Square in space not required for Clinical Assessment Centre activities, which has allowed us to bring colleagues based at Centurion House back into 3 Hardman Square.

Hot desking

7. To make more efficient use of our existing desk capacity we are reviewing the way in which we hot desk.

8. In the 2nd floor Resources area at 3 Hardman St, we will be piloting a scheme that encourages staff to clear desks completely when they leave for meetings, training, etc. for longer than 2 hours, leaving those desks free for someone else to use. They will then find another available desk in the area when they return from their appointment.

9. We are working with representatives from each team to ensure that we address concerns and issues during the pilot phase, such as suitable storage to leave personal belongings.

10. We’ll continue to regularly monitor occupancy data specifically in the Resources area to measure the impact of the pilot with a view to rolling out to the rest of 3 Hardman St and London if successful and where appropriate.
Workplace audits

11 In June, we engaged architects Broadway Malyan to carry out workplace audits at 3 Hardman St and the London office, looking at occupancy levels and desk capacity against UK legal limitations, BCO (British Council of Offices) standards, and the base build capacity of services such as air conditioning, toilets, fire escapes and lifts.

12 The audit at 3 Hardman St concluded that at 720 desks, we are close to the maximum capacity governed by the base build capacity of services and BCO standards, and shouldn’t install any further desks. The audit excludes the CAC space at 3 Hardman St so we would have the opportunity to increase desk capacity somewhat in that area if it became available.

13 The audit in London also concluded that at 104 desks (including offices), we are close to the maximum capacity on the East Wing for the same reasons and shouldn’t install any further desks. The report suggests we should consider spreading desks out over a wider area of the floor so that they are not so closely condensed along one wing.

Property consultants

14 With the first lease break at 3 Hardman Street being in April 2024 and the requirement for retaining the original CAC space being assessed over the next 12 months, we will defer considering property options here to Q4 2020 to tie in with a review of the MPTS accommodation requirement.

15 In London, there is no lease break and the current lease ends in May 2029. We are proposing to carry out work to parts of the office to increase desk capacity and introduce more flexible working provision, rather than consider different property options at this point.

16 In Manchester, the lease for the St James’s Building ends in January 2024, we will engage property consultants in Q4 2020 to review property options here. Although 3 years out may seem like a long period to consider property options, the size of the requirement (50-60,000 sq ft) means that options would typically include properties not yet under construction.

17 For information, the lease on the Scotland office at The Tun in Edinburgh ends in September 2021, so we will be reviewing property options here in Q3 2020.

London reception and meeting room area

18 In December, we highlighted that the reception area in London is large for the size of office and number of visitors and there is an opportunity to reconfigure the area to create different and more flexible work spaces, which would provide accommodation
for headcount increases and address the requirements for quiet work space and collaborative work areas raised by staff in response to the HTS survey in 2018.

19 We also identified an opportunity to make single use spaces such as Patient Liaison rooms and Directors’ rooms more widely available when not occupied for their primary purpose.

20 We have engaged architects, Broadway Malyan to develop plans to achieve this, and added to their brief a requirement to bring the Corporate Directorate into the main body of the office.

21 The architects have developed the proposed layout shown in Annex A which provides for:

- A more appropriate sized reception and waiting area which allows for the introduction of new reception technology.
- The moving of the Corporate Directorate to be in the main body of E wing and visible.
- An increase in the total area provided for office accommodation to future proof against headcount increases, including an increase from 104 to 126 desks.
- The number of rooms used as offices remains the same.
- Soft seating, quiet work spaces and collaborative workspaces.
- A Patient Liaison meeting room visible from the reception desk.
- Accommodation for the Registration Services team included in the main office area.
- The retention of all existing Registration booths and existing south wing meeting rooms.

22 Following consideration of these plans by the Executive Board, and any adjustments to the plans resulting from this, we would be in a position to commence work in December 2019 with a view to complete by the end of Q1 2019.
Accommodation Strategy Update Paper

4 – Annex A