
MANAGEMENT BOARD

Northern Estate Accommodation Programme

Paper from John Borley, Director General of Facilities

For the meeting on 13 November 2013

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on plans to overhaul the Northern Estate.

Action for the Board

2. The Board is asked to note the progress on developing a suitable Programme, and is invited to:

- Indicate whether it will wish to review the Strategic Outline Programme Case early next year.
- Agree to seek Commission agreement that for Member decant planning purposes we adhere closely to the policy of two staff per Member.
- Note that the Programme sets a wider context for DCCS/DIS co-location.
- Consider how best to engage Member Committees and the Commission in this process.

Introduction

3. Three of the Northern Estate buildings are overdue for refurbishment: Norman Shaw North (NSN), 1 Derby Gate (1DG) and 1 Parliament St (1PS). The requirements include renewing or replacing aged mechanical and electrical plant; improving environmental performance; upgrading blast protection; and, notably, achieving statutory compliance for fire safety arrangements.

4. A sequence of projects was proposed in a draft House of Commons Accommodation Programme Outline Business Case in 2011, but the subsequent decision by the MPS to occupy Curtis Green Building for their own purposes has required the scenarios in that Case to be revised.

5. In June 2013 the Commission was provided with an overview of the programme, in a paper¹ which undertook to seek Management Board approval of an accommodation plan in December 2013, followed by presentations to F&S and the Commission in Spring 2014.

6. A Strategic Outline Programme Case (SOPC) should be available in draft by the year end, and in final form early in 2015. It will identify options and provide cost estimates for the work, including the associated requirements and costs for decant accommodation. The decant requirement will address, as well, any expected needs of the Fire Safety Improvement Works and Cast Iron Roofs programmes; and, as far as is possible at this early stage, those of the Palace of Westminster Restoration and Renewal Programme. The SOPC will present options for sequencing the building projects, including the implications for decant. It will also consider different delivery models such as a partnering approach with industry, as well as our more usual contracting arrangements.

The Board as a whole may wish to review this Case before it is submitted to the Accounting Officer

Consultation

7. This paper reflects work being done primarily by the Estates Directorate and Accommodation Services. Stakeholder engagement involving Member Committees and House Departments will become an essential and central feature of the Programme as it develops.

Member Decant

8. The House Accommodation Policy, endorsed by the Commission in 2011, states that Members should not expect to accommodate more than two staff each on the estate. In practice, although the Accommodation Whips have endorsed and promulgated the policy, many Members have space to accommodate more staff than this, and as a result each Member now has, on average, about three staff at Westminster. This gives rise to pressure on Member and Member staff accommodation which is likely to be exacerbated when Members are decanted out of Norman Shaw North, which has large rooms capable of accommodating a Member and several staff. It is proposed that we seek agreement from the Commission that for Member decant planning purpose we adhere closely to the policy of two staff per Member.

¹ HCC 2013 / 24

Does the Board agree with this approach?

9. The decant plan will though aim to locate Members and their staff within buildings that are of suitable condition and provide the most resilience: in all likelihood, this means adopting 7 Millbank as a Member decant building.

Options

10. The SOPC will seek to identify a 'preferred way forward' for the Northern Estate Accommodation Programme, and release funds for the development of Outline Business Cases by Project Leaders at the project level. It is expected to consider at least the following options:

- a. **A phased approach with overlap** addressing the 3 buildings in sequence, but with work on 1PS starting before the completion of NSN.
- b. **A phased approach with no overlap** between building projects, in order to limit the amount of parallel Member decant and the volume of construction work taking place at any one time.
- c. **A concurrent approach**, decanting all three buildings at the same time. This approach may provide economies of scale, and allow building rationalisation and improvements not otherwise readily available.

11. These options have not yet been fully defined, but at this range the phased approach with overlap appears to offer the best chance of completing before the start of R&R while minimising the size of the decant building required.

DIS / DCCS Co-location

12. The Corporate Business Plan includes the following objective: 'To make the most of Committee Office and Library resources by trialling co-location'. It is already apparent that this trial has been a success, and likely therefore to lead to a demand for further movements of DIS and DCCS staff into a common location. The SOPC will aim to meet this demand as a beneficial, cost free consequence of the programme; but otherwise it will identify any cost premium that might arise from co-location options that require additional work.

The Board may wish to note, and comment on, the relationship between the Accommodation Programme and the Co-location project.

Member Engagement

13. The Finance and Services Committee is expecting a paper on Northern Estate decant for its meeting on 20 November, and the Commission will receive a paper on the Accommodation Programme in February.

The Board may wish to discuss what these papers should contain.

Governance of the Accommodation Programme

14. The HoC outbuilding refurbishment requirements are of a scale, complexity, business impact and profile that a Programme Board is required to provide oversight and support. The Clerk of the House intends to appoint the Director-General of Facilities as SRO, who will then establish a programme board. The board will include Senior Users from the Departments most closely concerned, as well as a Programme Director who will drive delivery of the works, and a senior member of Accommodation Services to take responsibility for overseeing the office moves.

15. The programme would be managed as a number of inter-related Projects: Refurbishment Projects to tackle the buildings themselves; and Enabling Projects, essentially to allow the necessary decanting and re-occupation. Each will require a dedicated project management team; and each team would require a construction project lead, and a moves management lead. The two leads would work closely together, reporting to the Programme Director.

16. Working level co-ordination between the Programme and the more modest requirements of the House of Lords will be provided by the Parliamentary Accommodation Programme Board, with high level oversight and assurance role from the PEB.

Risk management

17. The Programme addresses a risk, Shortage of Accommodation and Decant Space, which has been escalated to the Facilities Management Board and, for visibility, to the Management Board, rated as Red. Approval of the SOPC and the acquisition of decant space should reduce this risk to target level.

House of Lords implications

18. Northern Estate Refurbishment is a Commons only Programme, although certain options under consideration may have implications for the House of Lords: in particular, the two Houses have agreed to work together in order to achieve the best use of any spare accommodation capacity for decant purposes.

Stakeholder engagement and equality analysis

19. Stakeholder engagement will be an important feature of the programme, and equality analyses will be undertaken as it progresses.

John Borley, Director General of Facilities
6 November 2013