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COMMITTEE:	BABERGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	MONDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2022 9.30 AM
VENUE:	KING EDMUND CHAMBER, ENDEAVOUR HOUSE, 8 RUSSELL ROAD, IPSWICH

Members	
<u>Conservative</u> Melanie Barrett Mary McLaren (Chair) Adrian Osborne	<u>Independent</u> Kathryn Grandon (Vice-Chair) John Hinton <u>Green</u> Jane Gould

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The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded.

AGENDA

PART 1

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

Page(s)

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| 1 | APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES | |
| 2 | DECLARATION OF INTERESTS | |
| 3 | CALL-IN PROTOCOL FOR THE BABERGH CABINET DECISION
7 FEBRUARY 2022 | 5 - 8 |

Members are asked to approve the Call-in Protocol.

4 **CALL-IN OF THE BABERGH CABINET DECISION FOR 9 - 10
BCa/21/38 ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY -
ENDEAVOUR HOUSE**

Decision made by Cabinet on 7 February 2022 in respect of the following report was called in for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure Rules as detailed in the Constitution: Part 3: Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Section 12 to Section 15.

a **BCa/21/38 ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY - 11 - 34
ENDEAVOUR HOUSE**

Cabinet Decision Notice, Cabinet Report and reference to recorded minutes are attached. The Lead Member and Lead Officer are invited to attend and respond to questions.

Draft minutes to follow and to be tabled at the meeting.

Date and Time of next meeting

Please note that the next meeting is scheduled is a joint meeting with Mid Suffolk Monday 21 March 2022 at 9:30am

Webcasting/ Live Streaming

The Webcast of the meeting will be available to view on the Councils Youtube page:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSWf_0D13zmegAf5Qv_aZSg

For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements and facilities for people with disabilities, please contact the Committee Officer, H. Holloway Committee Services on: 01449 724681 or Email: Committees@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Introduction to Public Meetings

Babergh/Mid Suffolk District Councils are committed to Open Government. The proceedings of this meeting are open to the public, apart from any confidential or exempt items which may have to be considered in the absence of the press and public.

Domestic Arrangements:

- Toilets are situated opposite the meeting room.
- Cold water is also available outside opposite the room.
- Please switch off all mobile phones or turn them to silent.

Evacuating the building in an emergency: Information for Visitors:

If you hear the alarm:

1. Leave the building immediately via a Fire Exit and make your way to the Assembly Point (Ipswich Town Football Ground).
2. Follow the signs directing you to the Fire Exits at each end of the floor.
3. Do not enter the Atrium (Ground Floor area and walkways). If you are in the Atrium at the time of the Alarm, follow the signs to the nearest Fire Exit.
4. Use the stairs, not the lifts.
5. Do not re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so.

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Agenda Item 3

Protocol for Call-in

Item	Guidance Description	Notes
1.	Chair to seek a proposer and a seconder for agreement of the attached Call-in protocol. Committee members to vote on the proposed protocol.	
2.	<p>Chair to introduce the Call-in and the Committee to agree the scope of the Call-in based on the points made in the Call-in Notice:</p> <p>I believe the paper that was presented to Cabinet on Monday, BCa/21/38 did not contain sufficient information on the capital costs of the works proposed for cabinet to make an informed decision.</p> <p>6.7 of the report states:</p> <p><i>The total costs per Council would be £250,000 and the total net saving per Council would be £338,00.</i></p> <p>The later calculation has been explained, the former is referred to in the following point (6.8 in the report).</p> <p><i>The Capital costs are estimated and will be refined during the Technical Design Stage of the project.</i></p> <p>This is the only reference made in the paper with no breakdown on how £250,000 will be spent. This is compounded by the fact that this is just a share of the overall costs as its split across both councils.</p> <p>At the Cabinet on 7 Feb which I attended and watched on You Tube I noted that no Cabinet Member asked questions on costs or debated these elements of the issue.</p> <p>My contention is that the cabinet approved the paper on a reduction to the floor plate but neglected to consider the expenditure. There should be an opportunity to examine, debate and vote on the capital costs once these details are available. This is a key decision as proposed expenditure is over £150,000. To fully comply with our constitution councillors must fully consider all the circumstances (see extract below from the notice displayed on forthcoming decisions list) – this has not happened.</p>	

	<p>A key decision (as per Part 1, 12.9.1 in the Constitution) is an Executive decision which is likely to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Result in the Council spending, or saving a significant amount compared with the Budget for the service or function the decision relates to 2. Have a “significant” effect on communities living or working in an area made up of two or more wards <p>When assessing whether or not a decision is a key decision Councillors must consider all the circumstances of the case. However, a decision which results in a significant amount spent or saved will generally be considered to be a key decision if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The amount spent is £150,000 or more of revenue or capital expenditure <p>Expenditure on this scale must not be delegated.</p>	
3.	<p>Once the scope has been agreed the Lead Signatory will present the reason for the Call-in and why the Committee should scrutinise the decision, this will be up to a maximum of 10 minutes which the clerk will time. (The Lead Signatory may choose to call other councillors from those listed on the Call-In notice, but the maximum amount of time will remain ten minutes collectively)</p>	
4.	<p>The Chair will then ask the Cabinet Member (s) to present the reason (s) why the decision was taken by Cabinet (this will be no greater than 10 minutes)</p>	
4.1	<p>The Chair to invite Committee Members to ask questions of the Lead Signatory and the Cabinet Member(s) for further information.</p>	
4.2.	<p>The Chair to invite Committee Members to ask questions of officers and other Members of Cabinet (if present)</p>	
4.3.	<p>The Chair to invite Committee Members to ask further question in light of new information provided.</p>	
4.4	<p>The Chair to invite the Cabinet Member(s) followed by the Lead Signatory to provide a summary of the respective cases (Allowing each summary 5 minutes)</p>	
4.5	<p>Members of the Cabinet and Lead Signatory to leave the meeting.</p>	

4.6	<p>The Committee will then be asked to debate the issue and take one of the following courses of action: -</p> <p>(1) Refer the matter back to the Cabinet for reconsideration, together with the observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet will then take a final decision and that decision cannot be called in.</p> <p>(2) Seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer as to whether the decision is contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the policy framework or the budget and if applicable refer the matter to full Council for a final decision.</p> <p>(3) That the decision be upheld and implemented immediately.</p> <p>In each case setting out in writing the nature of its concern.</p>	
4.7	<p>There will be a vote given the reason for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's decision (if the Cabinet Members have indicated that they are prepared to take the matter back to the Committee that will be noted and referred to together with the reason)</p>	
4.8	<p>The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have the discretion to operate the above process flexibly where it is considered that changes would be conducive to the effective performance of the Scrutiny role.</p>	
4.9	<p>Any motion must be proposed and seconded and only one motion can be debated at a time. When the debate has finished the motion will be put to the vote.</p>	
4.10	<p>Individual Councillors can ask for their own vote to be recorded and this will be noted by the Clerk. If Committee request a recorded vote this will need to be proposed and seconded and supported by up to three or more councillors.</p>	
5.	<p>Once motions have been agreed the meeting will close.</p>	

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Agenda Item 4

BCa/21/38 ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY- ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

Call- in to the Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 February 2022

The following Councillors agree that the cabinet decision taken on Monday 7 February 2022 should be called-in for scrutiny, for the following reasons:

I believe the paper that was presented to Cabinet on Monday, BCa/21/38 did not contain sufficient information on the capital costs of the works proposed for cabinet to make an informed decision.

6.7 of the report states:

The total costs per Council would be £250,000 and the total net saving per Council would be £338,00.

The later calculation has been explained, the former is referred to in the following point (6.8 in the report).

The Capital costs are estimated and will be refined during the Technical Design Stage of the project.

This is the only reference made in the paper with no breakdown on how £250,000 will be spent. This is compounded by the fact that this is just a share of the overall costs as its split across both councils.

At the Cabinet on 7 Feb which I attended and watched on You Tube I noted that no Cabinet Member asked questions on costs or debated these elements of the issue.

My contention is that the cabinet approved the paper on a reduction to the floor plate but neglected to consider the expenditure. There should be an opportunity to examine, debate and vote on the capital costs once these details are available. This is a key decision as proposed expenditure is over £150,000. To fully comply with our constitution councillors must fully consider all the circumstances (see extract below from the notice displayed on forthcoming decisions list) – this has not happened.

A key decision (as per Part 1, 12.9.1 in the Constitution) is an Executive decision which is likely to:

1. Result in the Council spending, or saving a significant amount compared with the Budget for the service or function the decision relates to
2. Have a “significant” effect on communities living or working in an area made up of two or more wards

When assessing whether or not a decision is a key decision Councillors must consider all the circumstances of the case. However, a decision which results in a significant amount spent or saved will generally be considered to be a key decision if:

1. The amount spent is £150,000 or more of revenue or capital expenditure

Expenditure on this scale must not be delegated.

**Councillor Melanie Barrett
Councillor Trevor Cresswell
Councillor Jane Gould**

**Councillor Margaret Maybury
Councillor Mark Newman
Councillor Mick Fraser**

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Agenda Item 4a

Monday, 7 February 2022



BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISIONS NOTICE

**DECISIONS BY THE BABERGH CABINET
CALL IN DEADLINE 5:00PM ON 16 FEBRUARY 2022**

The following decisions have been taken by the Cabinet and will come into effect on 17 February 2022 unless the call-in procedure is activated. For clarity, where an item is 'to be noted', 'received' or recommended to Council for a decision, this is deemed not to be a formal Executive decision and so the call-in provisions will not apply.

BCa/21/35 GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2022/23 AND FOUR-YEAR OUTLOOK

It was **RESOLVED**: -

- 1.1 That the General Fund Budget proposals for 2022/23 and four-year outlook set out in the report be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 21 February 2022.
- 1.2 That the General Fund Budget for 2022/23 be based on a 2% increase to Band D Council Tax.

REASON FOR DECISION

To bring together all the relevant information to enable Cabinet Members to review, consider and comment upon the Council's General Fund budget for endorsement and recommendation to Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Setting a balanced budget is a statutory requirement, therefore no other options are appropriate in respect of this.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/21/36 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2022/23 BUDGET

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That the HRA Budget proposals for 2022/23 set out in the report be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 21 February 2022.**
- 1.2 That the CPI + 1% increase of 4.1% in Council House rents, equivalent to an average rent increase of £3.72 a week for social rents and £5.23 a week for affordable rents be implemented.**
- 1.3 That garage rents were kept at the same level as 2021/22.**
- 1.4 That Sheltered Housing service charges were kept at the same level as 2021/22.**
- 1.5 That Sheltered Housing utility charges were kept at the same level as 2021/22.**
- 1.6 That the budgeted surplus of £511k be transferred to the Strategic Priorities reserve in 2022/23**
- 1.7 That in principle, Right to Buy (RTB) receipts should be retained to enable continued development and acquisition of new council dwellings.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To bring together all the relevant information to enable Cabinet Members to review, consider and comment upon the Councils Housing Revenue Account budget for recommendations to Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2022/23 is an essential element in achieving a balanced budget and sustainable medium-term position, therefore no other options are appropriate in respect of this.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/21/37 BUSINESS RATES RELIEF POLICIES

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That Cabinet gave authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Economy to agree the COVID-19 additional relief fund policy.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet agreed the retail, hospitality and leisure policy, transitional relief policy and supporting small business relief policy for 2022/23 as set out in Appendices a, b and c.**

1.3 That Cabinet gave authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree any future changes to the 2022/23 retail, hospitality and leisure discount policy.

1.4 That Cabinet gave authority to the Shared Revenues Partnership Operations Manager to administer the Covid-19 additional relief fund, discretionary retail, hospitality and leisure discount, transitional relief and supporting small business relief policies.

REASON FOR DECISION

To provide discretionary reliefs to support ratepayers in Babergh.

To enable the implementation of the discretionary schemes.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

2.1 Option 1 – Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Economy to agree a local discretionary COVID-19 additional relief fund policy once the modelling has been complete and system implications are understood.

A new policy can be introduced for the relief and applications can be invited from ratepayers.

2.2 Option 2 - Do nothing

There is no mandatory requirement on billing authorities to provide these discounts, however the Government is funding the scheme. It would therefore be an opportunity missed not to support local ratepayers.

Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Discount, Transitional Relief and Supporting Small Businesses Relief

2.3 Option 1 – Agree the draft policies in Appendices a, b and c. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree any future changes to the 2022/23 retail, hospitality, and leisure discount policy.

New policies can be introduced for the schemes. Delegations would be in place to allow the Council to act swiftly should the Government make any further changes to the scheme in the future.

2.4 Option 2 - Do nothing

There is no mandatory requirement on billing authorities to provide these discounts, however the Government is funding the scheme. It would therefore be an opportunity missed not to support local ratepayers.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/21/38 ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY - ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That the Cabinet agreed to reduce and reconfigure the floorspace demised to the Councils within Endeavour House in accordance with this report**
- 1.2 That the Cabinet delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Assets & Investments to deliver the reconfiguration of the floorspace including finalising the detailed design, the appointment of contractors and suppliers and completing negotiations with the landlords.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To create a fit for purpose workspace at Endeavour House to reinforce our organisational culture, enable collaboration, networking and learning whilst promoting well-being and supporting the delivery of effective and efficient services for residents.

To deliver financial savings over the term of the original lease period.

To enable the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

- 2.1 Option 1: Do nothing: retain the current office accommodation and layout within Endeavour House.** This is not a viable option as working practises have changed significantly since the pandemic and demand for traditional desk spaces in an office environment has reduced, whilst demand for space to collaborate with colleagues has increased. Doing nothing would fail to align with the adopted SAMP principles to ensure that our properties are well used, collaborative spaces that offer good value for money.
- 2.1 Option 2: Relocate to alternative premises.** Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils jointly relocated to Endeavour House in 2017 and committed to 10-year leases with break options at the fifth year. Endeavour House continues to offer BMSDC high quality office accommodation and our occupation aligns with all the principles of the SAMP. At Endeavour House we share accommodation and services with partner organisations such as Suffolk County Council, who for example deliver IT services to BMSDC but co-location also helps to support partnership working across the public sector. Endeavour House is well-located with easy access to public transport and has good communal facilities such as a canteen, café and informal meeting spaces which have helped to attract and retain staff. Relocating to other premises at this time is not viable. There are very few buildings across the County that would be able to provide shared services and spaces similar to those we use at Endeavour House and as such it is likely that relocating would increase our space requirements and costs.
- 2.2 Option 3: Become fully digital Councils without a Headquarters building.** Whilst working practises and technology have changed significantly there is still a need for in-person meetings from a legal perspective, such as full Council meetings and planning committees but also from a practical perspective to support our people who are unable to safely work remotely and to support collaborative work and training across teams, service areas and organisations. This is therefore not a viable option.
- 2.3 Option 4: Reconfigure accommodation within Endeavour House to meet changing**

working practices. Endeavour House is well located to meet organisational needs however over the last 2 years our use of office accommodation has changed significantly with more people working remotely and growing demand for collaboration spaces when people do attend Endeavour House. Our existing office accommodation could be reconfigured to deliver the desk and collaboration spaces needed by the Councils within 1 floorplate enabling the remaining floor plate to be returned to the landlords by instigating the break clause in March 2022. This option will deliver a creative and efficient workspace with increased opportunities to collaborate, align with the principles of SAMP as well as offering financial savings.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/21/39 HAVEN GATEWAY PARTNERSHIP MEMBERSHIP

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That the key information in this report which outlined the current economic funding and policy landscape and the range of partnerships, which now existed across the East of England, which support the Babergh/Mid Suffolk economy, be noted.**
- 1.2 That the withdrawal of the Council's membership of the Haven Gateway Partnership from 31 March 2022 be approved.**
- 1.3 That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Economic Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth to finalise any legal documents associated with a withdrawal from the Partnership.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure future resources are diverted to areas and partnerships to drive greatest growth and support, especially as part of covid 19 recovery.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

- 2.1 Option 1 – To remain within the partnership from end of March 2022 working with the Haven Gateway team to review a new vision for the future
- 2.2 Option 2 – To decide not to remain within the Haven Gateway Partnership and to withdraw from membership at end of March 2022

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

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BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: BDC Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/21/38
FROM: Cabinet Member for Assets & Investments	DATE OF MEETING: 07/02/2022
OFFICER: Assistant Director for Assets and Investments	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB329

Accommodation & Agile Strategy – Endeavour House

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the business case for proposed changes to BMSDC (Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council) accommodation within Endeavour House in alignment with the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) adopted by the Councils in January 2021 and the Councils' developing Accommodation and Agile programme.
- 1.2 The Accommodation and Agile programme seeks to deliver fit for purpose workspace that reinforces our organisational culture, enables collaboration, networking, learning and promotes well-being; and that supports the delivery of effective and efficient services for residents.
- 1.3 The reconfiguration as set out within this report will deliver savings of approximately £675,000 whilst also delivering modern fit for purpose workspace for our organisations.
- 1.4 The Accommodation and Agile programme in accordance with the SAMP will review all BMSDC operational workspaces, in addition to Endeavour House, which is the first workspace to be reviewed.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 **Option 1** Do nothing: retain the current office accommodation and layout within Endeavour House. This is not a viable option as working practises have changed significantly since the pandemic and demand for traditional desk spaces in an office environment has reduced, whilst demand for space to collaborate with colleagues has increased. Doing nothing would fail to align with the adopted SAMP principles to ensure that our properties are well used, collaborative spaces that offer good value for money.
- 2.2 **Option 2** Relocate to alternative premises. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils jointly relocated to Endeavour House in 2017 and committed to 10-year leases with break options at the fifth year. Endeavour House continues to offer BMSDC high quality office accommodation and our occupation aligns with all the principles of the SAMP. At Endeavour House we share accommodation and services with partner organisations such as Suffolk County Council, who for example deliver IT services to BMSDC but co-location also helps to support partnership working across the public sector. Endeavour House is well-located with easy access to public transport and has good communal facilities such as a canteen, café and informal meeting spaces which have helped to attract and retain staff. Relocating to other premises at this time is not

viable. There are very few buildings across the County that would be able to provide shared services and spaces similar to those we use at Endeavour House and as such it is likely that relocating would increase our space requirements and costs.

- 2.3 **Option 3** Become fully digital Councils without a Headquarters building. Whilst working practises and technology have changed significantly there is still a need for in-person meetings from a legal perspective, such as full Council meetings and planning committees but also from a practical perspective to support our people who are unable to safely work remotely and to support collaborative work and training across teams, service areas and organisations. This is therefore not a viable option.
- 2.4 **Option 4** Reconfigure accommodation within Endeavour House to meet changing working practices. Endeavour House is well located to meet organisational needs however over the last 2 years our use of office accommodation has changed significantly with more people working remotely and growing demand for collaboration spaces when people do attend Endeavour House. Our existing office accommodation could be reconfigured to deliver the desk and collaboration spaces needed by the Councils within 1 floorplate enabling the remaining floor plate to be returned to the landlords by instigating the break clause in March 2022. This option will deliver a creative and efficient workspace with increased opportunities to collaborate, align with the principles of SAMP as well as offering financial savings.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Cabinet agrees to reduce and reconfigure the floorspace demised to the Councils within Endeavour House in accordance with this report
- 3.2 That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Assets & Investments to deliver the reconfiguration of the floorspace including finalising the detailed design, the appointment of contractors and suppliers and completing negotiations with the landlords.

REASON FOR DECISION

To create a fit for purpose workspace at Endeavour House to reinforce our organisational culture, enable collaboration, networking and learning whilst promoting well-being and supporting the delivery of effective and efficient services for residents.

To deliver financial savings over the term of the original lease period.

To enable the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project.

4. KEY INFORMATION

4.1 Context

- 4.1.1 BMSDC moved to Endeavour House and adopted an agile approach to working in 2017 which included office based and remote working. Since the first lockdown in March 2020, our working practises have changed and as such we have taken this opportunity to review our accommodation needs moving forward and ahead of our

lease break option in September 2022. Many public and private sector organisations have already decided that they will not return to how they worked pre COVID-19, this report focuses on the office space provided by our occupation of Endeavour House and looks to the future vision of how we can use and occupy this space to meet our developing and future needs to support our agile workforce. Our accommodation and agile programme seeks to review all our operational workspaces in accordance with the Strategic Asset Management principles within the SAMP.

4.2 Strategic Asset Management Principles

4.2.1 The SAMP describes the Councils' approach to the management of its assets and provides links to the operational and technical details that underpin the overall strategy.

4.2.2 The SAMP adopts the following Asset Management Principles which have been embedded into the Accommodation & Agile Programme:

			
Occupying Efficiently & Purposefully	Meeting Customer Needs	Sustainability	Meeting our People Needs
<p>Well maintained</p> <p>Well used/Fit for purpose</p> <p>Good value for money</p> <p>Minimise Accommodation Need</p> <p>Effective Collaboration Space</p> <p>Shared Spaces</p> <p>Spaces that stimulate creative thinking</p>	<p>Accessible Services</p> <p>A Positive experience</p> <p>Partner Collaboration</p>	<p>Sustainable financial resources</p> <p>Transport /Minimise Travel</p> <p>Reducing Consumption</p> <p>Carbon Neutral</p> <p>Safe and healthy environments that support physical and mental wellbeing</p>	<p>Protecting personal and private space</p> <p>Protecting confidentiality</p> <p>Ensuring fairness and equality when making future decisions</p> <p>Working Patterns</p>

4.3 Endeavour House Occupation

4.3.1 The Councils currently hold leases for the Lime and Gold blocks on the first floor of Endeavour House on the following terms:

- Term – 10 years from 1st October 2017
- Break option – to determine the day before the 5th anniversary on no less than 6 months prior written notice (notice to be given no later than 31st March 2022 to expire 30th September 2022)
- Alterations – internal and non-structural permitted with Landlord consent

4.3.2 This accommodation currently provides a total desk number of 212 equally split across both Gold and Lime floorplates as well as meeting capacity for 58 people within 10 meeting rooms contained within these floorplates.

4.4 Phased Return to the Workplace

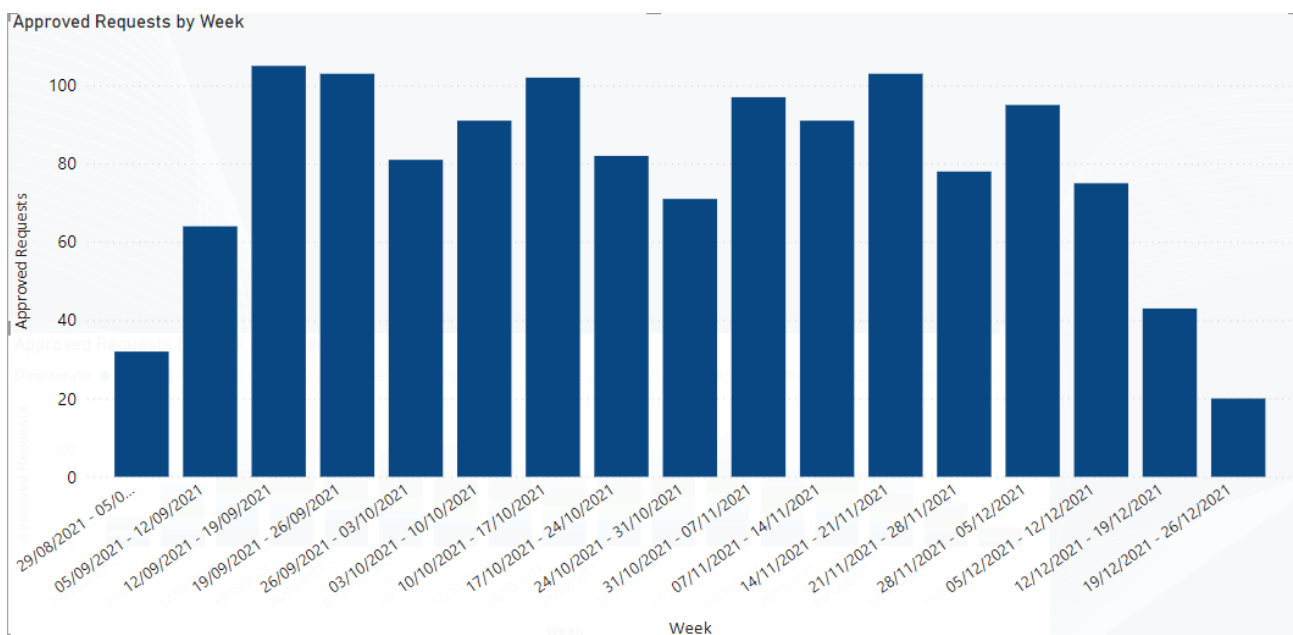
4.4.1 At the outset of the pandemic in March 2020 the Councils announced that staff would continue to work from home as the default position to end of the financial year to align with the review of agile working practices during the pandemic and beyond. All offices and touchdown points were closed during the initial response to the pandemic whilst the depot sites remained open for operational staff only. Endeavour House remained open for business-critical activities only, with a booking system and eligibility criteria being introduced in Autumn 2020 enabling approximately 50 desks to be made available in a COVID secure manner.

4.4.2 With the easing of restrictions last Summer, we moved into the next phase of a return to the workplace from August 2021 increasing the number of COVID safe desks on the booking system to approximately 90 desks and opening the office up for all staff to attend Endeavour House through the booking system provided they are well and there is sufficient COVID safe capacity. Endeavour House remains open although from December 2021 until January 2022 in line with Government advice we were continuing to advise staff to work from home if they could do so.

4.5 Occupancy and Use Data

4.5.1 During the autumn of 2019 we undertook some occupancy studies to assess the average usage of desks over a two-week period. This showed an average of 60% occupancy across both floorplates with maximum occupancy levels at 197 people and minimum levels at 77 people although typical occupation levels were around 127 people, the busiest days being Mondays and Tuesdays, with the Gold floorplate generally being busier than Lime. Approximately 65% of Meeting room capacity was used.

4.5.2 With the benefit of an online booking system, we are now able to monitor occupancy on a daily and weekly basis. Since the phased return to our workspace in Endeavour House we have seen occupancy data fluctuate as set out below:



- 4.5.3 Between August and the beginning of December 2021 we saw attendance at Endeavour House increase to about 100 people a week with Wednesdays being the busiest days.
- 4.5.4 The review of data collected before and during the pandemic supports the reduced need for traditional desk spaces and the need for more agile working spaces within Endeavour House to support our people to deliver services across our districts efficiently and effectively.
- 4.5.5 Staff and Councillor working groups were established in Summer 2021 to help to develop a brief for consultants to redesign our office accommodation in Endeavour House and to ensure that the needs of the organisation were reflected. The working groups have considered what worked well and not worked whilst working remotely during the pandemic, on-going and future workspace needs as well as reviewing the consultant's proposals and helping to review the current agile policies and framework in place. In addition, an all-staff survey was undertaken to determine future work patterns and consequently anticipated capacity.
- 4.5.6 It is proposed that one floorplate is returned to the landlords and the other floorplate retained and reconfigured to deliver accommodation that is fit for our future. Capacity will be reduced to deliver approximately 60% of the workspaces provided previously and will include both traditional and agile workspaces.

4.6 **The Endeavour House workspace vision**

- 4.6.1 The Proposals will create a current and future-proofed, fit for purpose and agile workspace at Endeavour House as a destination that reinforces our organisational culture, enables collaboration, and enhances activity. It will create a workspace destination with a sense of belonging where networking, learning, collaboration and bringing people together to solve complex problems that meet our core strategic objectives and deliver effective and efficient services for residents. Our people will be able to take advantage of a flexible workspace based on our vision and values to support them now and in the future adapting to change and the ways we work for the wellbeing of all.
- 4.6.2 Focussing on our headquarter workspace initially will embed our organisational identity and create a welcoming and inspiring workspace that we connect to as an organisation. It will create the opportunity and facilitate the ability to come together when needed, enabling our people to carry out the right task, in the right place at the right time. Whilst acknowledging not everyone can work from home, or to accommodate those tasks that are not appropriate to undertake remotely, we want to accommodate our people's needs and ensure the right balance and space for a refreshed working environment that promotes and protects their private and personal space.
- 4.6.3 Works to Endeavour House to deliver a minimum of 128 workspaces with meeting rooms in a collaborative and agile environment will be funded by savings generated by returning one floorplate to the landlord in accordance with the break options within the leases.

4.7 The Endeavour House Proposal

- 4.7.1 We commissioned Concertus to review, design and manage the accommodation programme for Endeavour House. Concertus provided layout options for development in June 2021, and these were widely considered by the project team, staff working group, members working group and ELT.
- 4.7.2 Following feedback from our stakeholders we gave Concertus a final brief in November 2021 to produce the concept design and develop a cost plan for the Gold Floorplate to accommodate a minimum of 128 workspaces in a collaborative and agile environment. The concept plan is attached as appendix 1.
- 4.7.3 The developed proposal provides 48 fixed/hot desks that will re-use existing furniture. The agile working environments will provide working spaces for 68 individuals. In addition, dedicated meeting space can accommodate a further 46 individuals. The total maximum occupancy accommodated will be 162 individuals. We do not anticipate 100% occupancy levels as it is likely that people will use multiple spaces throughout their time in the office.

4.8 Program

- 4.8.1 Having now completed the Concept Design work the next steps are:

January 2022	Spatial co-ordination
February - March	Technical Design, Tendering
March -August	Configuration of new workspace
August - September	Handover
Late September 2022	Use of new workspace

- 4.8.2 The timetable above is subject to change subject to the availability of contractors and materials but will need to be managed in relation to our lease timeline commitments.

4.9 Organisational Culture and Hybrid Working Practices

- 4.9.1 BMSDC have enabled and supported agile working since moving to Endeavour House in 2017 and as such have existing policies in place that support working in this way. The principles behind our existing agile policy and guidelines therefore continue to apply but the documentation will be streamlined with more detail around how these work in practice and will include detailed Q & A guidance to provide increased support for our people now that agile working has become embedded within our culture and working practices.

4.9.2 The well-being of our people is at the core of the agile and accommodation programme and the pandemic has illustrated that working in a truly agile/ hybrid way needs a proactive approach to well-being. This programme has considered what good looks like when working in a hybrid way and considerable progress has already been made with new initiatives being implemented during the pandemic to support well-being for example, we have introduced a central Wellbeing Hub on Connect, the development of a Staff Wellbeing Strategy and monthly webinars covering a range of areas to support mental health.

4.9.3 The guiding principles for supporting our people to work in an agile and hybrid way are set out below: -

- Enable Ways of working that support mental and physical health and wellbeing to promote good work / life balance.
- Health and Safety is never compromised
- Our people feel able to separate work life and home life
- Everyone can be productive – they have focus space, confidential space, and space where they can come together with colleagues
- Our people have the tools required to do their job
- Everyone has access to all the training required to work anywhere and the development to lead / manage / support remotely – Staff and Line Managers have been asked for feedback around extra support and tools required to work in a hybrid way and a programme of work will be designed once all feedback has been collated and analysed.
- Our training and development is accessible to everyone, irrespective of their role – supported by equipment and access for all teams
- People are actively engaged in the process, feel on board, and are consulted on any longer-term changes to their ways of working.

4.10 Health and Safety Implications

4.10.1 There are a few health and safety (H&S) implications associated with hybrid working. These include:

- Display Screen Equipment,
- A safe working environment,
 - lone working,
 - fire safety and
 - accidents.

4.10.2 Within the office setting the majority of these are addressed through the provision of appropriate furniture, work equipment, good housekeeping, workplace first aiders, fire wardens and workplace supervision. With agile and hybrid working staff are provided with home working ICT kits, access to an additional computer screen and if needed a DSE (Display Screen Equipment) compliant chair to set up a workstation at home. To check that the home working arrangements for DSE and the suitability of the home working environment, an annual DSE compliance checklist must be completed by each member of staff who works from home.

4.10.3 As a result of recent Health and Safety Executive Guidance (November 2021); what an employer is now required to do to ensure suitable home working arrangements has been clarified. This specifically addresses DSE arrangements. In particular, the employer must confirm that the employee is able to work with the required posture to be DSE compliant.

4.10.4 Where this survey reveals that the home working arrangements for the individual employee do not meet this posture standard the Council will either need to provide adequate DSE compliant office capacity such as that being provided at Endeavour House; or alternatively, there will be the option to provide additional furniture and/or equipment to enable DSE compliance to be achieved in individual member of staff's home.

4.11 ICT Implications

4.11.1 There are three key ICT implications that arise from both the office redesign and continued agile/hybrid approach. These relate to connectivity, collaboration, and resource booking.

4.11.2 Connectivity – this is about ensuring that ICT devices are able, where necessary, to connect to the corporate network.

- Staff will be able to connect via both fixed network points (cabled), and where fixed network points are not readily available, via the Corporate Wi-Fi provision.
- Some remedial cabling work may be required to ensure the connectivity of other devices (such as printers).
- Once final designs are in place, the potential need to re-locate any fixed network ports will be determined for fixed devices and for any network points required in the collaborative and agile work zones.

4.11.3 Collaboration – this is about ensuring that we have, particularly in agile, collaborative and meeting spaces, the relevant devices that support hybrid working.

- MS Teams compatible devices will be available to support Large Hybrid Meetings and meetings of smaller groups.
- Where reasonably practicable, Microsoft compatible electronic whiteboards will be available for collaboration purposes.

4.11.4 Resource Booking – this is about ensuring that resources (desks, storage, agile zones etc) can be booked by staff as appropriate.

- We continue to work with ICT colleagues across the sector to determine the best fit solution, one that is intuitive to use from PCs, Laptops, Tablets and Smartphones, but also:
 - Allows for quick and easy addition and removal of bookable resource types (desks, storage etc),
 - Enables automated approval processes,
 - Integrates with existing toolsets (e.g., MS Outlook),
 - Can utilise digital signage to show statuses of certain resource types

- Can utilise sensor technology to automate the freeing up of unused resources
- Provides detailed insights of usage over time.

4.11.5 In addition to the above implications and with the aim of supporting our staff to get the most out of our existing collaboration tools, BMSDC ICT have introduced Bytesize training sessions for staff. Currently these cover topics such as Digital Collaboration, MS Teams and Supporting Wellbeing through Technology. It is the aim of BMSDC IT to continue to add to this list of topics over time and, early in this calendar year, develop specific sessions for Councillors.

5. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

5.1 The Joint Corporate Plan (2019-27) is designed to address the challenges and seize the opportunities facing the districts and their organisations for the foreseeable future. The Councils' vision is to have 'great communities with bright & healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home.'

5.2 For each theme there are priorities which Strategic Asset Management has a significant part to play in supporting, ensuring that the Councils make the best of their assets underpinning the ability to achieve the priorities set out in the corporate plan. Specific links are detailed in the Strategic Asset Management Plan adopted in January 2021 to show how these are met through managing corporate assets effectively and efficiently and investing to generate income.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The proposals set out above to release the Lime floorplate would result in saving for rent, rates, and service charges in excess of £200,000 per annum – this would be pro-rata'd for 2022/23 based on the date the floorplate is released back to the Landlord and adjusted to allow for any dilapidations due in respect of this floorplate. Dilapidations works or payments are required under the lease whether it is terminated by operating the break or expiry of the full term and as such this payment or expense would be brought forward by operating the break.

6.2 Assuming the break is operated to terminate the lease from 30th September 2022, gross revenue savings of circa £1.17m could be achieved to the end of the lease in October 2027.

6.3 Work to improve our collaborative workspace would be self-funded through the savings we can achieve through operating the break for one floorplate and thereby reducing our office accommodation in Endeavour House from 2 floorplates to 1. There will be costs of works and equipment to deliver our aspirations for the remaining floorplate and these have been estimated as £500,000 based on a cost plan provided by our consultants. These works would be funded by borrowing. Provision has been made in both Council's Budgets for 22/23 for £300,000 to cover to Endeavour House and the wider accommodation and agile programme.

6.4 Over the duration of the Lease term the cost/savings for Endeavour House up to and including 2027/2028 are as follows:

Item	Total	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28*
Capital (Charged through MRP)	500	500	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Items							
MRP	500	0	97	99	100	101	103
Dilapidations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less savings from rent, rates, service charge for Lime floorplates.	- 1,176	-116	-231	-231	-231	-231	-135
Total Net Revenue	-676	-116	-134	-133	-131	-130	-32
Costs per Council	250	250	0	0	0	0	0
Total Net Revenue per Council	-338	-58	-67	-66	-66	-65	-16

**To end October 2027 i.e., 7 months*

- 6.5 Over the duration of the Lease term to October 2027 the total costs to MRP would be £500,000.
- 6.6 The total savings would be £1,176,000 giving a net saving for the project of £676,000.
- 6.7 The total costs per Council would be £250,000 and the total net savings per Council would be £338,000.
- 6.8 The Capital costs are estimated and will be refined during the Technical Design Stage of the project.
- 6.9 The dilapidations in respect of surrendering the Lime floorplate have not been quantified yet and will be part of early discussions with our Landlord, Suffolk County Council. We have reasonable provision in the Corporate Buildings revenue budget to enable us to satisfy our responsibilities under the terms of the Lease around repair, maintenance and yielding up the space back to the Landlord.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 BMSDC are Tenants of Suffolk County Council under a Lease from 1st October 2017 for Gold and Lime floorplates.
- 7.2 Break Option - we can determine the Lease the day before the 5th anniversary (i.e., 30st September 2022) on no less than 6 months prior written notice. We have already indicated to Suffolk County Council that it is our intention to exercise the break and notice is to be served no later than 31st March 2022 to ensure compliance with the Lease.

7.3 Landlord's consent is required for all internal and non-structural alterations, such consent is not to be unreasonably withheld. We have shared early information about our vision and concept design with Suffolk County Council to aid detailed change control conversations about alterations to the demise in line with the Lease. These conversations will continue through the Technical Design phase to ensure Landlord consent is in place at the right time.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 This report is most closely linked with the Significant Business Risk No. 15 that the safety, health & wellbeing of individuals may be compromised and No. 16 failure to achieve vision and strategic priorities and ambition (as per corporate plan).

8.2 The following have been identified as key risks pertaining to this report:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Price inflation/availability of contractors &/delays	3 Probable	3 Bad	Programme includes a 2-week float
Failure to exercise the Break Option	2 Unlikely	3 Bad	Early discussions and instructions to legal to prepare Notice and reach agreement according to Programme and the Lease
Failure to deliver required outcomes or keep project within allocated budget	2 Unlikely	3 Bad	Project management will be undertaken and controls in place with competent consultants and contractors

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 The Accommodation & Agile programme aligns with the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) adopted by the Councils in January 2021 and includes the principles repeated in this report.

9.2 Following adoption of the SAMP broad engagement and consultation has taken place with Officers, Members and Staff to ensure that there is a collective buy-in to the Accommodation & Agile approach for Endeavour House through a series of briefings, working groups, surveys, and updates to the intranet pages on Connect.

9.3 The Unions have continued to be informed and updated in respect of this programme and we will be consulting further as the Concept Design for Endeavour House is approved and the programme moves into its technical design phase. There are no changes to terms and conditions as employees will continue to work at Endeavour House as a contractual base, nor are there any significant changes to ways of working, and so there is requirement to formally consult.

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

In delivering this project, due consideration has been given to the Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The design and workspace planning have associated environment impacts. The detailed environment implications and mitigations are to be considered through the design and construction phases and into use of the new workspace. Overall, it is intended that the new workspace will re-use and recycle furniture and equipment where possible and appropriate and seek to reduce consumption and travel where possible.

12. CONCLUSIONS

12.1 There are significant benefits to our approach to agile and hybrid working and the subsequent proposals for Endeavour House which are designed to support our people in delivering quality services to our residents in an effective and efficient manner. The main benefits of these proposals are: -

- Reduced accommodation costs
- Improved resource efficiency
- Providing effective workspace that supports everyone to deliver organisational outcomes – enabling greater productivity, improved morale, and workspace that attracts/staff retention/attracting new employees
- Empowering staff choice – doing the right tasks in the right place, with the right resources and which will drive performance and productivity
- Supports transformation of the organisation and helps to drive cultural change
- Prevents a return to 'traditional' ways of working – enabling more flexible environments and positive impact on wellbeing
- Enables collaborative working at all levels
- Significant improvements in working environment - enables targeted investment in better facilities and to respond to staff feedback in meaningful way, improving morale and motivation through an improved office environment which is designed to support smarter ways of working with a variety of suitable workstation styles
- Enables social distancing and managing occupational levels in the short term and control of occupancy in potential future pandemics
- Carbon savings through reduced consumption and travel
- Identity & Culture of organisation promoted through workspace and agile approach.

12.2 Agile and hybrid working practices, combined with digital processes and service delivery, will reduce operating costs, improve productivity, and staff well-being therefore enabling the Councils to focus on the outcomes that best serve our communities.

13. APPENDICES

Title	Location
(a) Drawing No 120333-CDP-ZZ-01-DR-I-0004-P2 Endeavour House – Space Planning for BMSDC Ipswich – Gold Floor 1 Developed Proposal	Attached
(b)	
(c)	
(d)	

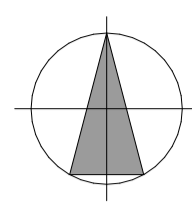
14. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS None

15. REPORT AUTHORS Sara Cameron – Corporate Manager Strategic Property, Suzanne Hughes Head of HR & OD, Matthew Harding Corporate Manager ICT & Programmes

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APPENDIX A



Key

- Existing Walls
- New Proposed Walls
- Walls to be Demolished

Occupancy Levels | Gold, Floor 1

- Fixed / Hot Desking**
- 48No. Desks
 - (Based upon a 1600W x 800D desk size).
 - Total: 48No.**
- Agile Working Environments**
- 14No. to Agile Working Environment 1
 - 8No. to Agile Working Environment 2
 - 8No. to Agile Working Environment 3
 - 8No. to Agile Working Environment 4
 - 8No. to Agile Working Environment 5
 - 10No. to Agile Working Environment 6
 - 4No. to Agile Working Environment 7
 - 8No. to Agile Working Environment 8
 - Total: 68No.**
- 20No. to Central Boardroom
 - 10No. to Meeting Room 1
 - 10No. to Meeting Room 2
 - 6No. to Meeting Room
 - Total: 46No.**

Total Occupancy Level: 162No. Individuals

The above figures indicate maximum occupancy levels to each space however, levels will fluctuate when in use.

Briefing Occupancy Figures

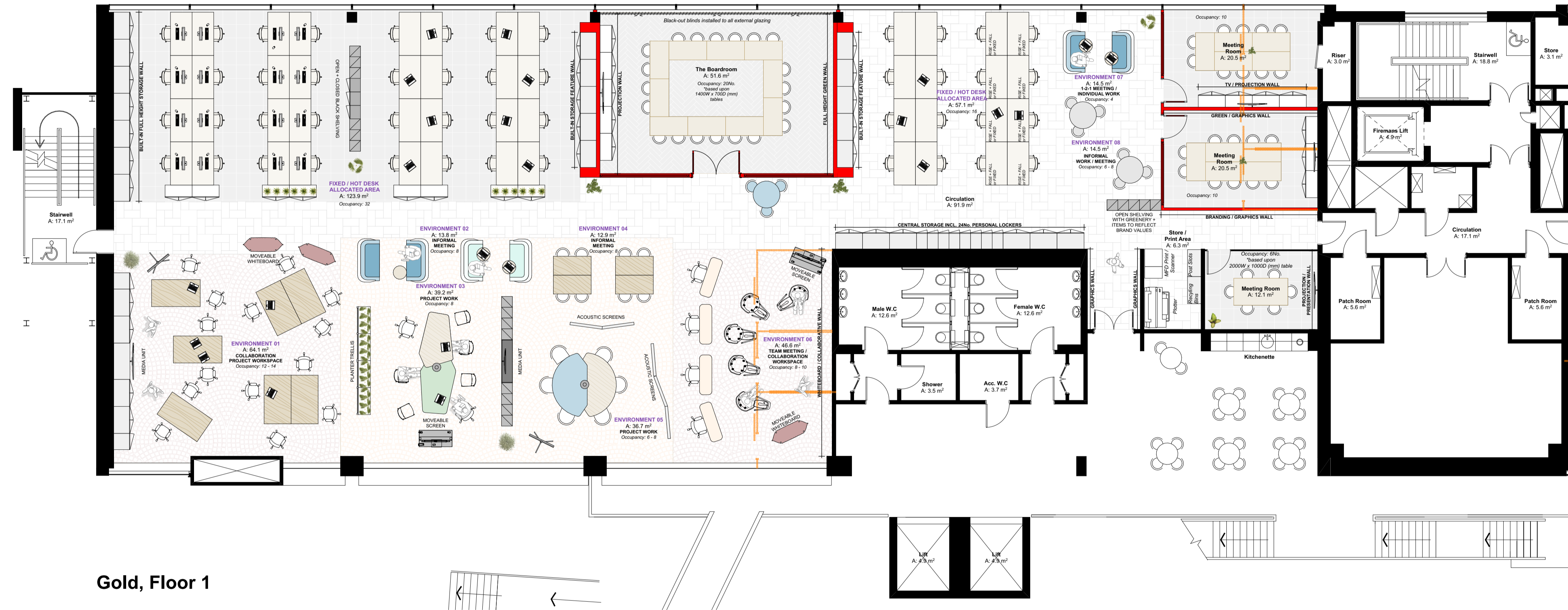
- 50No. spaces allocated to traditional / hot desks.
- 78No. spaces for Agile / Collaborative work zones.

General Design + Scope of Works Notes

Note that the above figures do not consider COVID-19 social distancing measures in place and can be advised and undertaken during the next project stage.

During the next project stage, the design team will determine and re-configure the power and data services to suit the new desk layout as well as the agile working environments.

Where new meeting rooms have been proposed to be demolished, mechanical and electrical services would need to be co-ordinated to suit the new layout, re-configured and stripped back where necessary.



Gold, Floor 1

The above illustrates an option to demolish 6No. existing glazed meeting rooms and in lieu construct stud partitions to form 2No. larger meeting rooms. This would address individual Meeting Room acoustics. Each Meeting Room features full height glazing with a glazed internal door, providing transparency through the spaces.

Disclaimer.
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REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHKD
P1	07.01.2022	KC	First Issue.	BB
P2	24.01.2022	KC	Plan revised to Option 2.	



S3-REVIEW & COMMENT	Project	Endeavour House - Space Planning for BMSDC Ipswich	Project Number	120333
	Drawing Title	Gold Floor 1 Developed Proposal	Scales	1:100 At A1 Size
	Lead Designer	Kelly Content	Drawn	KC
			Chkd	BB
			Date	01.2022
	email: kelly.content@concertus.co.uk		Tel: 07710 920188	

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RECORDING OF BABERGH CABINET MEETING 7 FEBRUARY 2022

Please use the following link to access the YouTube video recording of the Babergh Cabinet Meeting 7 February 2022:

[Babergh Cabinet Meeting - 07/02/2022 - YouTube](#)

The recording of BCa/21/38 Accommodation and Agile Strategy – Endeavour House starts at **1:41:58**

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