



# Southwark's Fairer Future workplace strategy 2017-2020

*'To provide a bright, modern, flexible work environment for all staff  
that supports mobility, productivity and collaboration across  
departments.'*

November 2016

# Foreword



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Cabinet Member for Finance,  
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Southwark residents deserve the very best from their council, and we need to keep up with the changing ways they want to access our services. Modernising the way we manage our workforce, workplace and IT is crucial if we are to respond to local needs, operate with reduced budgets, and keep up with changes in the wider world.

For any organisation, its staff are its greatest asset, and this is particularly true for Southwark Council, where so many of our staff deliver excellent frontline services to our residents every day. We know that the majority of our staff think Southwark is a good place to work and are proud to work here, understanding and respecting our values as an organisation. But we also know there are improvements to be made. It's also essential that if the council is going to be fit for the future, and operate effectively with smaller budgets and growing demands, we need to make some changes to the way we support and manage our workforce.

The workplace strategy sets out our vision to provide a bright, modern flexible work environment for all staff that supports mobility, productivity and collaboration across departments.

Together with our workforce and IT strategies this strategy will help us to be fit for the future, and transform how Southwark operates as a council, fulfilling our promise to modernise our council by transforming where and how we work in order to better serve our customers.

# Introduction

Our workplace strategy aims to create attractive and inspiring work environments to support new work styles, increase adaptability of space, and increase business performance. We will be looking to maximise the benefits from our office accommodation through increasing space utilisation, diversifying facilities and creating opportunities to share service and space provision.

The way we work is changing, and has to change fast enough to keep pace with the current challenging climate. To date the development of 160 Tooley Street and the Queens Road (QR) campus has provided cutting edge office accommodation that supports new ways of working in a space efficient and cost effective way. The introduction of modern ways of working has reduced accommodation costs, helped establish closer cross-department working by breaking down silos and enabled the consolidation of the council's office building portfolio over the last seven years. There are however still a number of ageing buildings housing front facing services that cannot be accommodated within 160 Tooley Street or the Queens Road campus.

## **Our work spaces can be defined in the following ways:**

### 1. Office functions, which includes:

- Corporate back office
- Home working
- On-the-move working

### 2. Community service functions

- a. flexible locations where the public are invited in to our work space and/or need front facing space
- b. specialist customer focused spaces (e.g. libraries, adult day centres)

### 3. Democratic support functions

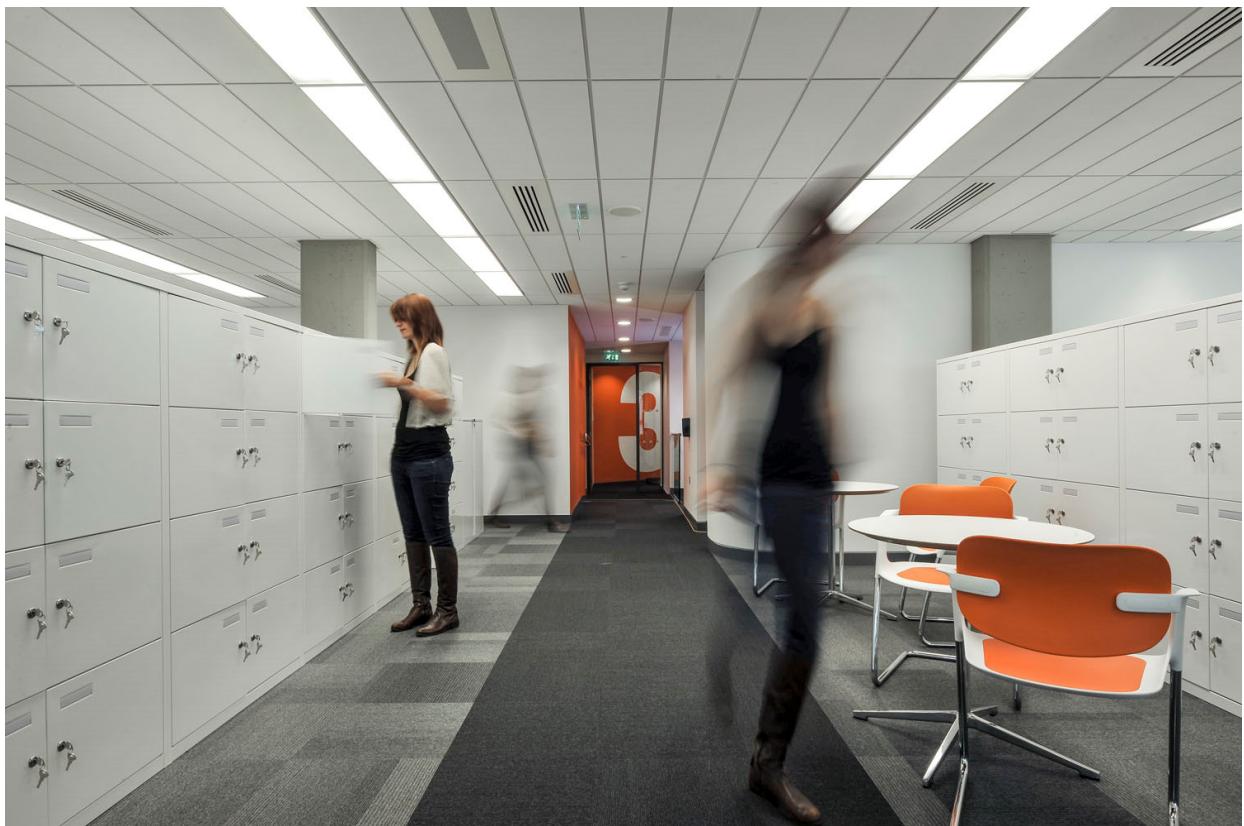
- (space for special events, council meetings, function meeting)

We need to look at our current space and define our requirements and needs over the next three years. This step change will form part of the workplace strategy, which will enable modern ways of working through transforming how and where we work. A good modern working environment should support a complexity of working patterns and encourage collaborative, integrated and cross functional activity. It should be about challenging the way work is done and fitting out the organisation to work in different ways. The practical driver for adopting new ways of working and offering a rich variety of alternative work settings such as desk sharing, remote or home working, is to enable the council to reduce the number of buildings and/or floor space it deploys as office space, now and in the future.

Workplace is focusing on the office function spaces and the flexible community service functions. We need to enable and encourage people to enjoy their working or office space. This needs to be combined with policies to support flexible working and flexible hours and the provision of technology to enable staff to work anywhere - employees will feel more valued as a result.

As 160 Tooley Street and Queens Road (1-3) have proved, getting the workplace right is a key enabler to support change in the workforce. However, the accommodation model developed by the council is now several years old. To meet the challenges ahead, keep up with the changes in the way we work and to streamline with the emerging workforce and IT strategies, a review of the model is required. Our workplace strategy is much more than the opening of Queens Road 4 but is a review of all of our office accommodation, reduction of satellite sites, a commitment to a consistent office offer, and goes hand in hand with increased mobile working.

We will be looking into the council's office accommodation model and reviewing accommodation requirements and service delivery model where necessary.



# Current state

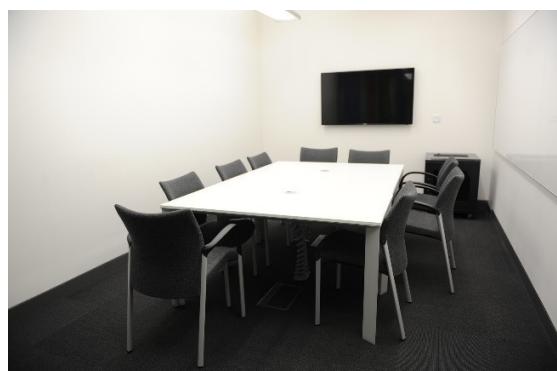
## Drivers for change

### Change is always on the horizon

Buildings have long lives but the needs and requirements placed on them change often, sometimes rapidly, and can lead to complex and competing variations in usage and even structure. As seen in 160 Tooley Street; spaces like the atrium and rooms on floors 1-5 are not adaptable in both physical and technological aspects.

### Collaboration

Working in a team village can be beneficial but the use of space prohibits communication and collaboration further than desk neighbours. Rigid rows and storage cupboards create physical barriers throughout 160 Tooley Street. In addition, the uniform structure and layout of meeting rooms exacerbates the sense of formality and old ways of working and communicating.



### Diversity of space

Due to the diverse nature of our work and the important relationships we hold with partners and customers, our staff require varied working spaces and environments. This is difficult to accommodate presently as room layouts and seating arrangements are not flexible.

### Utilisation of space

A lot of space currently exists for staff to utilise. Areas are currently chosen on availability rather than functionality or capacity; this can often lead to a shortage of rooms with larger capacity or video conference facilities. The introduction of 'working from home' has given greater flexibility to our staff. This has led to 160 Tooley Street's capacity varying significantly throughout the week, with Mondays and Fridays seeing troughs in office space use.

### Culture

Workplace transformation will provide an opportunity to instil a sense of culture, ownership and belonging with the aim of changing old practices and mind-sets.

## Today in the life of...

We have looked at the type of work that people do in the council and have categorised people into four distinct areas. This has been done to ensure their requirements are thought through and considered. We have identified four types of employee:

- Fix
- Flex
- Free
- Front-line

Below are four examples of how these types of employee currently interact in the council.

'Fix' - staff whose job requires them to work in a fixed area in a specific location – so work primarily in a customer service or administrative role (e.g. customer service centre, library, court, crematoria) and need to have access to appropriate technology. They may have specific hours of working.



*Lloyd is office based requiring him to work primarily in the same location. He is technically meant to be able to work at any desk in the office but sits in the same place every day. His space is his own and he is happy to leave his desk cluttered for him to return to the next day. Under his desk he has all of his archived paper documents that he spends time looking through each day. He has weekly team meetings in plain meeting rooms and he is provided handouts of the meeting agenda.*

**Fix**

'Flex' - staff work predominantly in an office location but use a wide variety of different work spaces in that environment. They can also access home working and remote working from other sites and locations. These staff have a lot of flexibility to balance their work and personal life demands.



*Joyce splits her time between project sites and the office. In her meetings on and off site Joyce has to take pen and paper to take down notes and write up back at her desk. She often wants to present to her team in meeting rooms with AV functionality so has to book a few days in advance. Joyce instead spends large amounts of time printing documents for her team to read and reference. Joyce works from home on Friday as there is no one in the office on a Friday anyway.*

**Flex**

'Free' staff 'spend the majority of time out of the office on the move, travelling around the borough or working with clients and customers in their homes or properties. They will only come into office space for meetings or a quick touchdown. They are often not constrained to normal core working hours.



*Carmen spends a lot of time working out and about in the borough. She has to take lots of paper forms into meetings and often struggles to read what the customer has written on them. Carmen doesn't have a car so relies on the car pool scheme heavily. She's always concerned there will not be one available when she needs it most. Carmen uses Southwark buildings to discuss sensitive topics in a safe place. She has to use plain clinical office rooms to deliver uncomfortable messages to clients.*

'Front-Line' staff work across the borough, they are the Southwark employees that our customers will recognise and interact with. The majority of their time is spent on the move in Southwark, with the core tools they need to complete their work. They can operate outside of business hours and will rarely need to come and use council office space.



### Front-Line

*Joseph works as a road sweeper and goes straight on the beat in the morning. He collects his equipment barrow from the secure spot on a street he found at the end of his last shift. His route for the day ends near the Old Kent Road hub where the facilities are basic so he chooses to shower at home. He will often spend the majority of the day alone, meeting only his supervisor that comes to check on him doing the daily round.*

# Workplace vision

***'To provide a bright, modern, flexible work environment for all staff that supports mobility, productivity and collaboration across departments.'***

We need to look at our current space, understand our requirements and needs over the next three years and transform our workplace. This step change will form part of our strategy, which will enable modern ways of working through transforming how and where we work. A good modern working environment should support a complexity of working patterns and encourage collaborative, integrated and cross functional activity. Current workplace behaviour and culture should be challenged in order to promote modern ways of working and maximise the benefits of new working environments.



## Scope

The workplace strategy covers the Southwark Council buildings (see model below):

- Queens Road Campus (including QR 1-3 & the new QR 4 building)
- 160 Tooley Street
- Buildings that are able to be consolidated into the Queens Road campus

The strategy is also targeted to provide the employees of Southwark the capability to meet their requirements in the following environments:

- Corporate back office
- Home working
- On-the-move working

Focus for the workplace will also be on flexible locations where the public are invited in to our work space and/or need front facing space.

# Workplace design principles

In keeping with the existing workplace principles we have developed the following transformation design principles which will inform and guide decisions over the next three years as this workplace strategy is implemented.

In workplace, the principles that we currently work to, support the efficient running of the council. By facilitating the transformation of services, they contribute to the improvement of services for local people through the provision of a modern working environment.

The principles still remain fit for purpose but we now need to think about incorporating the new build at Queens Road and revitalising other office accommodation to ensure that we have the right provision of space and services in three years' time and beyond.

**Maximise opportunity:** Maximise capacity and usefulness of all available space

**Quality:** Provide a consistent level of quality workplaces

**Diversity:** Provide workplaces that meet the diverse needs of all Southwark Council members, officers, customers and partners

**Welcoming:** All Southwark Council building users feel welcome and are encouraged to fully utilise council buildings

**Revenue:** Generation opportunities are sought, consolidation of existing estate and release of strategic sites for regeneration

**Flexibility:** Space and facilities are fit for the changing requirements of the future

**Culture:** Develop working environments that promote and facilitate a collaborative culture

160 Tooley Street proved that new working environments can enable significant cultural change and, seven years later, there is now the need for our next cultural step change. The development of a fourth building at Queens Road presents the opportunity for the council to review how the existing workplace model has performed both in 160 Tooley Street and Queens Road 1-3. We have the chance to reflect and to consider how the model can be upgraded and improved to accommodate the wide variety of work styles and environments required to meet and support the emerging workforce.

# Priorities



**Culture** - There is an opportunity to embrace the richness and abundance of life in Southwark. Space can show achievements, successes and history so we instil a sense of pride in what we do throughout all our work space.



**Transport** - We need to reduce our environmental impact and carbon footprint, whilst still ensuring our staff can get to where they need to be and are provided with adequate facilities to support them in doing so (e.g. pool cars and bicycles, showers and drying rooms for cyclists).



**Public facing space** – There is daily interaction with the public at Queens Road and there is a little at 160 Tooley Street. Ground floor meeting rooms in Tooley Street need to be reviewed for the public facing purpose, training events and so on. We envisage interacting with the public in two ways: locations where the public are invited in to shared and flexible front facing spaces which are located alongside corporate offices accommodating multi-disciplined teams and also customer focused spaces built around the specialist services that the community requires (e.g. libraries, adult day centres, nurseries).



**Health and Wellness** - Having work spaces that encourage movement and spaces that take care of your physical and mental health is increasingly important in the working environment. There should be areas that are multi-purpose, functional and comfortable.



**Digital by Design** – We need to consider how we currently work with regard to services such as archiving, scanning, mail, and printing. There is a need to digitise and streamline the way these services are currently provided. There are also considerations to be made regarding the collation and posting of large numbers of documents (e.g. electoral, rents, etc.) which potentially could be done more cost effectively externally. Examining policies and procedures will be crucial to support this. To support this, we need to review on-site storage ensuring that whilst reducing the quantity of storage, items stored meet the requirements of the council's diverse business.



**Traded services consolidation** – We need to focus on our three depots that exist for non-office staff in the council. These are unsuitable with duplication of cost, support resources and management effort. This is compounded by the impact on operational effectiveness and the opportunities to share expertise, knowledge and resources in the most efficient way. Collaboration with regeneration is occurring to look for possible development land which will support the Fairer Future pledges.

**Workplace oversight** - Workplace oversight will be required to ensure principles and behaviours are carried out to make the most of new ways of working available. We need to consider how we best use our assets and ensure we get the most out of them. Monitoring tools such as online booking and attendance recording need to be looked at and clarity is needed regarding policies such as fixed desks and working from home days. We need to ensure that we embed and monitor workplace behaviours such as adhering to clear desk policies and reporting health and safety issues.



**Spaces for working** - We will create an intelligent environment, seamlessly integrating technology and our office space enabling us to free ourselves from our desks. We will require a variety of spaces designed around activities which will include a range of different collaboration areas, 'kitchen tables' (team meeting space), quiet spaces, loud spaces for meetings, small phone booths. Due to the introduction of Queens Road 4 and the implementation of a holistic workspace strategy there is an opportunity to introduce innovative ideas that will refresh and revitalise our space.



**Revenue generation** - We will maximise opportunities for bringing revenue into the council and increasing occupation levels in buildings including looking at the existing estate to see what can be consolidated in order to release strategic sites for regeneration.



**Partnership working** - By attracting partners to our sites, through dynamic office space and facilities, we will encourage collaboration and seamless working between ourselves and our partners and reap the benefits that working together can bring.



# Business needs and strategic objectives

We have identified eight priority business needs that we need to focus on. We have developed workplace specific strategic objectives that outline what we want to achieve in order to satisfy each business need.

<b>Reduced Costs</b>  Reduce number of buildings  Reduce square footage of buildings  Maximise capacity and usefulness of all available space  Consolidation of existing estate and release of strategic sites for regeneration  Identify opportunities to provide a range of flexible spaces for different services to share and 'sweat the asset'	<b>Collaboration</b>  Stakeholders feel welcome and are encouraged to fully utilise council buildings  Develop working environments that promote and facilitate a collaborative culture and encourage integrated and cross functional activity  Support the needs of partner businesses and organisations for mutual beneficial need  Integrate other organisations into our workplace through the design of facilities, technology provision and cultural alignment	<b>Digital by Design</b>  Digitise and streamline services such as archiving, scanning, mail and printing  Explore monitoring tools such as online booking and attendance recording  Moving to paperless working	<b>Inspiring Leadership</b>  Workplace oversight will be required to ensure principles and behaviours are carried out to make the most of new ways of working available  Encourage senior leaders to lead by example and fully utilise new spaces
<b>Behavioural Change</b>  Develop working environments that promote and facilitate a collaborative culture  Provide a consistent level of quality workplaces  Ensure we embed and monitor workplace behaviours such as adhering to clear desk policies and reporting health and safety issues	<b>Modern &amp; Flexible</b>  Provide workplaces that meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders  Space and facilities are fit for the changing requirements of the future  Maximise capacity and usefulness of all available space  Work more sustainably, responsibly and reduce our carbon footprint  Introduction of shared and flexible space. For example, corporate offices accommodating multi-disciplined teams whilst flexible enough to host public meetings	<b>High Performance</b>  Create flexible work spaces that can be utilised for both work and training  Provide a consistent level of quality workplaces  Introducing work spaces that encourage movement and promote physical and mental wellbeing  Embed and monitor workplace behaviours such as adhering to clear desk policies and reporting health and safety issues	<b>Simplify &amp; Innovate</b>  We will ensure our staff can get to where they need to be and are provided with the adequate facilities to support them in doing so (e.g. pool cars and bicycles)  Spaces are easy to book and are fully equipped to support new ways of working

# Deliverables

To implement an effective workplace strategy, fit for purpose for Southwark Council, there are three sections of work that need to be carried out.

## Current state review

We need to know how all our staff currently interact with the space and facilities we provide. This includes not just 160 Tooley Street and QR1-3 staff but also those that will be moving into QR4. This will help shape the design requirements of QR4 but also identify where there are gaps in how space is used in our current buildings.

## Key Deliverables

- Facilities utilisation analysis
- User research - customers and employees

## Evolve the working model

After analysis of how our space is currently used we will need to look at ways of changing our current behaviours and environments where necessary. The issues that need resolving should come from the current state review; however the answers to these won't be obvious. We need to evolve how we think we currently work to our hypothesis of where we want to be and what we want to look like. We need to test our hypothesis and refine our assumptions until we feel confident the council is ready for us to implement decisions that will affect our workplace.

## Key Deliverables

- Hypothesis
- Engage with IT and HR and consolidate strategies
- System testing of some of the new ways of working – it is imperative that we engage staff at the start of the process to look at what we are suggesting and also to allow them to give us ideas for changing and improving how we work. We will bring in a room pilot – looking at furniture, desks, and equipment – giving staff the chance to touch and feel and try

## Implementation

Below are the key activities and deliverables that will need to be undertaken to ensure we meet our priorities and strategic objectives set out. They will also initiate our new working model.

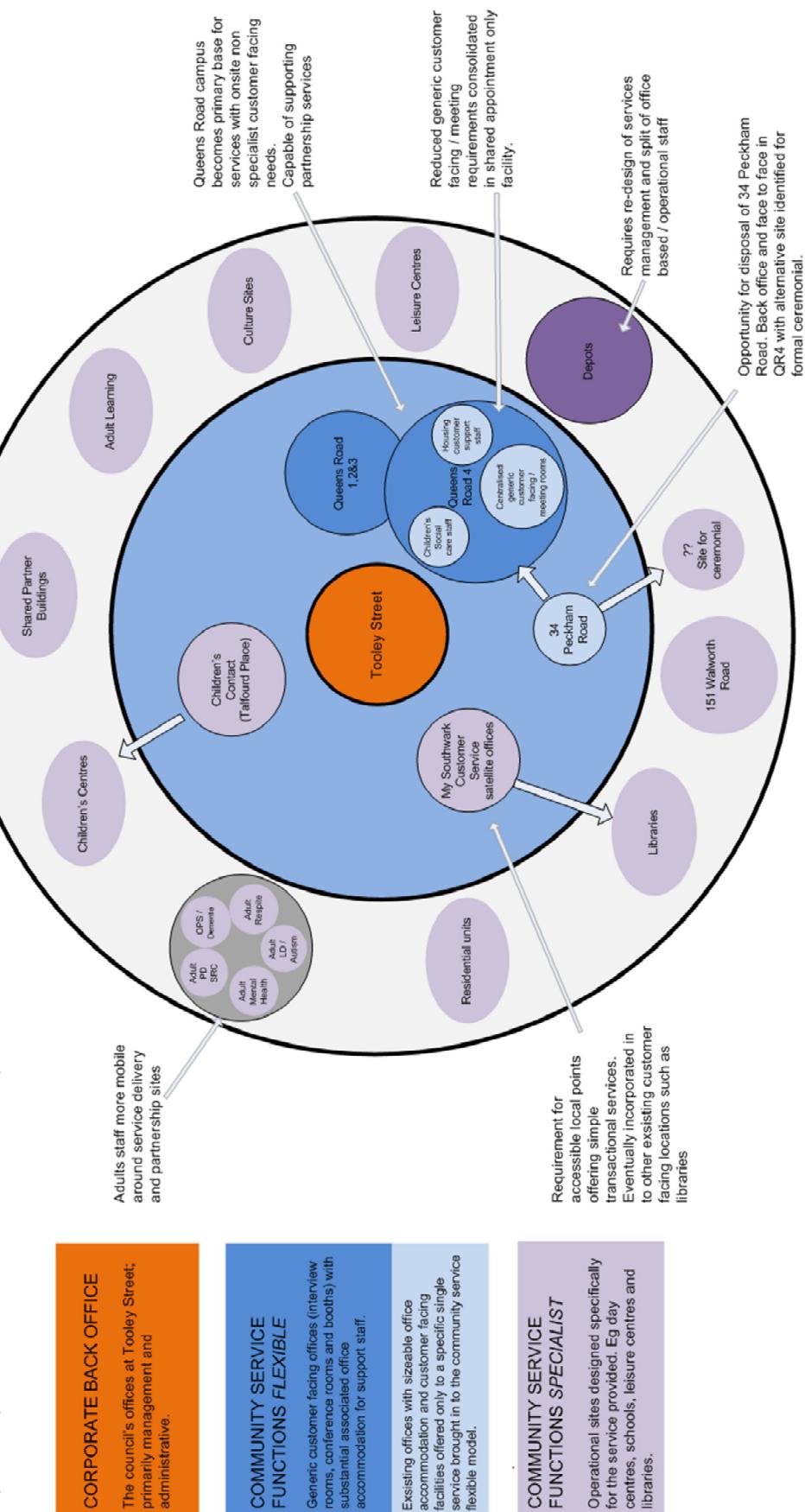
- Increase space utilisation, diversify facilities and create opportunities to share service and space provision
- Deliver a workplace that enables and encourages spaces for cultural change to continue and grow
- Educate people on the benefits of new facilities and new ways of working through, for example, establishing change and engagement champions to explain and reinforce new behaviours and attitudes
- Foster a culture of self-governance, whereby new behaviours and attitudes (e.g. management by outcomes) are promoted while old behaviours are discouraged

- Development of spaces that align with IT and HR's modernisation strategies. Range of technology which will enable our diverse workforce to free themselves from their desks and create fluidity between multiple work environments. We are looking for collaborative technology, policies and procedures that will naturally encourage working together in a variety of spaces, that allow personal interaction alongside customer interaction
- Work with Environment and Leisure to source an appropriate single depot plot that can accommodate all the council's non-office services. Centralise small depots and external working accommodation into one consolidated 'Super Depot' which has space to house vehicles, equipment and employees
- Queen's Road 4's build and practical completion which will fully develop the council's office accommodation across the two centre model. The development of QR4 will make it possible to release for redevelopment or disposal the following sites: Sumner House, Curlew House and 34 Peckham Road. It will also allow accommodation for services currently at 47b East Dulwich Road, which has to be vacated by December 2018 or soon after and front facing services from Bournemouth Road and Taplow
- Work with Children's Social Care to develop a model of front facing facilities that will meet their service requirements
- Work with the registrars to assess their service accommodation needs in relation to determining the extent of public facing facilities they require
- Work with other front facing services to understand service requirements where face to face interaction with the public is essential
- 'Digital by default' - undertake a review of digital capability (mail, paper etc.) and ensure the provision of facilities that support 'digital by default'
- We will support the needs of partner businesses and organisations for mutual beneficial need. This should include the design of facilities, technology provision and cultural alignment to integrate other organisations into our workplace
- Introduce a change champion network and also a recognised role – in the style of a floorwalker to ensure that our ways of working – clean desk policy, health and safety issues, etc. are followed and respected

The diagram on the next page gives a summary of how our office accommodation could look.

# Working accommodation strategy

Delivering the two centre flexible office accommodation model with specialist/operational services delivered from service specific sites



# Future state

Tomorrow in the life of...

By 2020 we anticipate that these employees will be able to work in the following types of way:



*Lloyd is based at Queens Road 4 in his office based role. Lloyd has an ergonomic desk with peripheral equipment specifically made for his needs. His work space accommodates both sitting and standing. He uses a laptop, a headset, a phone and has a screen available set-up specifically for his height. He has a locker that he uses to store personal items as the office has a clear desk policy and there is hanging space for his outdoor clothes. He is able to scan documents and send information to colleagues and there is a facility for several staff to work on the same document at the same time. Lloyd hands over to a colleague at 5pm because his shift hours are fixed.*



*Joyce is in and out of 160 Tooley Street regularly. She spends a lot of time with her team around a 'kitchen table'. As her device and laptop automatically connect to the office Wi-Fi, Joyce can work seamlessly around the building in meeting rooms, booths and quiet space where she can complete staff reviews and reports undisturbed. She then goes to an offsite client meeting, arriving early she is able to work on her laptop in a coffee shop whilst waiting. She can work from home, reviewing documents sent to her by her team and having a meeting where she connects with the client contract manager, using Skype. She can vary the days she comes into the office and this suits the nature of her work. Joyce also on this day takes two hours at midday to go and see her son at a sports day.*



*Carmen spends a lot of time working out and about in the borough. A typical day may start with working at home, checking emails, preparing notes for the day etc. She then goes to the main office to attend a case conference with a family and other professional colleagues, including a probation officer and a health worker who join the meeting remotely via Skype. Following this, she discusses the case further around a 'kitchen table' with team colleagues. She then takes a pool car to carry out home visits during this, she receives a call from one of her team who has had a difficult client meeting. She then drives back to Queen's Road to drop off her pool car and holds a supervision meeting in a comfortable, soft 1-2-1 room.*



*Most of Joseph's routes let him go near one of the cleaning service mess rooms on the housing estates. He likes to start each day with a clean set of tools by using the facilities in the mess room at the end of every shift to wash down and stock up his road sweeping equipment. Joseph is looking forward to his rotating routes next week, to ensure he can be nearer the super depot, so he can benefit from its welfare facilities. Proper showers and a chance to chat to peers makes him value his day far more.*

# Future vision

To reiterate our workplace vision Southwark Council's future will 'provide a bright, modern, flexible work environment for all staff that supports mobility, productivity and collaboration across departments.' The strategy will be embodied through the design of Queen's Road 4 which should provide the flagship working environment that is 'Fit for the Future'.

The future workplace strategy is bigger than Queen's Road 4. Existing Queens Road buildings and 160 Tooley Street will undergo transformation to create a consistent, flexible, and future proof working environment for all staff. Our ten priorities and seven design principles will be considered across the estate to maximise use of existing assets and also to build a Queens Road 4 building that is the best that it can be.

Our five key drivers for change will become exemplar themes throughout Southwark Council:

## **Change is always on the horizon**

We will have buildings/floors/rooms that have various possibilities for use and are expected to change over the medium to long term. Partners will flow in and out of our estate as we manage our own capacity and utilisation of space throughout our estate.

## **Collaboration**

Our meeting rooms, desks, and open space encourage collaboration behaviours within and between teams. It is the norm to come together and work rather than work and then come together.

## **Diversity of space**

Our fixed/flex/free/front-line staff, partners and customers have spaces that fit with how they need to use them. The spaces that exist are flexible and cater for all working styles as well as the actual work that needs to be carried out.

## **Utilisation of space**

The diverse space that's been created is balanced to ensure it is fully utilised by the proportion of people that use it. Rooms and desks are adaptable to match variations of capacity in buildings and there is always the appropriate technology at hand.

## **Culture**

Our positive working culture will be encouraged by the workplace and promoted within it. There will be visual prompts around the building to maintain our new practices and mind-sets and instil ownership and belonging to Southwark Council.

# Further information

For further information, please contact:

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