

Meeting: Governing Body			
Meeting Date	26 May 2021	Action	Approve
Item No.	7	Confidential	No
Title	Agile Working Pilot Proposal		
Presented By	Geoff Little, Accountable Officer		
Author	Lynne Ridsdale, Director of Corporate Core Services		
Clinical Lead	-		

Executive Summary

Bury CCG introduced agile working, supported by an approved Policy, in June 2018 following the relocation from Silver Street to the Bury Campus, which includes Townside Primary Care Centre, Bury Town Hall and 3 Knowsley Place.

In October 2020 Bury Clinical Commissioning Group and Bury Council agreed to the concept of a new and joint agile working model. The decision was made on the basis of:

- a largely positive experience during enforced home working during lockdown
- the potential benefits of a substantive agile arrangement which research tells us may include a reduction in fixed costs; improved staff productivity and engagement and contribution to the carbon neutral agenda
- reductions in available space in the town centre as a result of disrepair within the Town Hall in particular

It is recognised that any change in the way that we work needs to be carefully managed and that there are complex issues across workforce, estate and technology to address.

This paper outlines the high-level principles of the agile working pilot which it is proposed to roll out, from the easing at Stage 4 of the national lockdown.

Agile working will be open for all staff subject to the requirements of their role, but there is a particular imperative within the Bury campus sites where estate maintenance and social distancing adaptations have required significant reductions in estate footprint.

Recommendations

The Governing Body is asked to:

- note the update provided and specifically that an agile model is already in place within the CCG which will be enhanced further through this joint approach and refresh;
- support the roll out of the agile model for all staff on a voluntary basis, as described in this report from Stage 4 of the national roadmap out of lockdown, which is currently assumed to be 21 June 2021; and
- note the Agile Working Policy, once finalised, will be approved through the CCG's Remuneration Committee and appropriate Council governance arrangements; and
- note that the Council Cabinet are also receiving the pilot proposal for support.

Links to CCG Strategic Objectives	
SO1 - To support the Borough through a robust emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SO2 - To deliver our role in the Bury 2030 local industrial strategy priorities and recovery.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SO3 - To deliver improved outcomes through a programme of transformation to establish the capabilities required to deliver the 2030 vision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SO4 - To secure financial sustainability through the delivery of the agreed budget strategy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does this report seek to address any of the risks included on the Governing Body Assurance Framework? If yes, state which risk below:	
GBAF	

Implications						
Are there any quality, safeguarding or patient experience implications?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has any engagement (clinical, stakeholder or public/patient) been undertaken in relation to this report?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have any departments/organisations who will be affected been consulted ?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any conflicts of interest arising from the proposal or decision being requested?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any financial Implications?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is an Equality, Privacy or Quality Impact Assessment required?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, has an Equality, Privacy or Quality Impact Assessment been completed?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please give details below:						
The EA is currently in draft and will be presented alongside the final policy. Additionally, DPIAs will be undertaken to ensure appropriate provision is established for confidential working space where this is required.						
If no, please detail below the reason for not completing an Equality, Privacy or Quality Impact Assessment:						
N/A						
Are there any associated risks including Conflicts of Interest?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the risks on the CCG's risk register?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
The agile working strategy embraces the Let's do it! Principles by:						

Implications

- **Local** – enabling staff to work at locations and within the communities that suit service users
- **Enterprise** – working when and where people are most effective
- **Together** – harnessing collaboration through digital technologies and management of working patterns across teams and with regards service user needs and
- **Strengths-base** by flexing locations according to individual preference.

Agile working almost makes a direct contribution to reducing the carbon footprint and supporting achievement of the carbon neutrality target by 2038.

These proposals have been subject to stakeholder’s engagement, including:

- the Trades Unions
- staff, who have been surveyed about the proposals through a wellbeing and feedback model via MS Teams and the Change Agent network
- senior managers who have been consulted through the Strategic Leaders and Senior Managers Forums

Governance and Reporting

Meeting	Date	Outcome
N/A		

Agile Working Pilot Proposal

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents an updated position and sets out the principles for an Agile working Pilot across the CCG and Council.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Bury CCG introduced agile working, supported by an approved Policy, in June 2018 following the relocation from Silver Street to the Bury Campus, which includes Townside Primary Care Centre, Bury Town Hall and 3 Knowsley Place.

- 2.2 In October 2020 Bury Clinical Commissioning Group and Bury Council agreed to the concept of a new and joint agile working model. The decision was made on the basis of:

- a largely positive experience during enforced home working during lockdown
- the potential benefits of a substantive agile arrangement which research tells us may include a reduction in fixed costs; improved staff productivity and engagement and contribution to the carbon neutral agenda
- reductions in available space in the town centre as a result of disrepair within the Town Hall in particular

- 2.3 At that time, it was proposed that all office-based workers in Bury town centre should be required to work 20-80% of their time on an agile basis, with remaining time spent on site with shared desk and meeting space. The original terms have now been revised based on further work and staff feedback which has included:

- all staff have been invited to contact the Corporate Landlord if they require access to a desk once return to work is possible. Around one third of staff, across the CCG and Council, have requested access to a desk which can be accommodated, subject to ongoing review;
- A repeat of the survey of all staff working remotely has been undertaken with feedback reflecting that the majority of staff continue to experience the personal benefits of remote working and the vast majority are supportive of an agile approach in future;
- the majority of office-based staff have been migrated to full M365 functionality;
- The future Corporate Landlord model for remaining buildings has been designed and investment scoped. The model will be brought forward for future approval;
- A programme of improvements have been made in council estates to make them covid secure and to address long standing facilities improvements and risk mitigations. This includes establishing c140 “hot desk” (i.e. shared) seats in the Town Hall and 3KP;
- A robust performance management model has been established through the joint corporate plan and individual departmental plans, which set out delivery priorities and a process of performance reporting, to support outcomes-based management;

- A staff wellbeing model has been established, aligned to the national “5 ways to wellbeing” theory, to support people who are working remotely. The model has been evaluated and found to be a benefit by the majority of respondents

2.4 In addition, Ameo - a transformation partner was engaged by the Council in December 2020 to complete a “deep dive” into the agile strategy and enablers of success in recognition of the potentially significant contribution to the overall transformation programme which agile could make. The key messages from the deep dive are as follows:

- The outline strategy was endorsed as sector best practice;
- The scope for potential savings from asset disposal was also validated, including a potential £5m of one-off capital receipts identified from the disposal of unused buildings; and
- The requirement for clear terms and expectation in an underpinning policy was reiterated. Within this, the definition of a clear, common **workstyle** was recommended, rather than the potential myriad of arrangements based on personal preferences which the initial report proposed

2.5 This report sets out the final detail of the model to be implemented, which is a phased approach as follows:

- an agile-first workstyle to be adopted for all staff, subject to the requirements of their role, from Stage 4 of the national roadmap out of lockdown which is currently assumed to be 21 June 2021. The model will be implemented using current buildings and technology and with limited further investment; and
- structured evaluation at the end of the calendar year to inform the longer-term approach and a potential significant business case to reduce the buildings footprint and reinvest in digital infrastructure and shared facilities within the remaining estate.

3.0 Let’s ... work with Agility

3.1 The guiding principle of the agile working strategy is that “**work is something you do, not somewhere you go**”.

3.2 In support of this ethos, the following specific expectations will apply:

- All office-based staff will be encouraged to become agile workers on the basis it is mutually beneficial for the service and individual. **Agile working will only be applied by staff agreement**, however, some staff who are unable or unwilling to work with agility will be provided with office space to work from. Agile working may be revoked by either side if it is proven not to be effective;
- The model will **evolve** over time and with investment, based on evaluation and business case-based investment. Specifically, the model for June will be designed around the best of the home working experience during the

emergency but is a different construct as it includes face to face contact. Over time, the model rolled out in June will be expanded and invested in to improve communications and establish hybrid working

- The aim is to operate within a **high trust / high accountability** environment where:
 - staff have greater freedom to deliver when and where suits them;
 - work is measured by outcomes not attendance;
 - these impacts are demonstrated through more routine performance reviews;
 - Agile workers are subject to the **same rules**, procedures and expected standard of conduct and performance as when they were working in their former, fixed workplace. Agile workers must remain contactable at all times
- Staff whose role is **location dependant will continue to operate from their normal workplace**. Equivalent investments will however be made in facilities for non-office-based workers, as part of this strategy.

3.3 It is proposed that the CCG and Council commit to the principle of an agile-first workstyle which would require all workers to:

- completing routine **desk-based activity off site**, rather than at a prescribed work base. For example, completing email management, report writing and MS Teams meetings from home. Office time should be used for collaboration and fixed requirements only;
- arranging regular **face to face time** with colleagues, their line manager and customers at the most appropriate frequency and location for the work and personal preference. This may include access to CCG or Council meeting spaces, use of partner sites and non-confidential meetings in public spaces including cafes;
- accessing **necessary facilities and / or equipment on site** at CCG and Council locations for the fulfilment of particular roles, e.g. specialist meeting space and equipment will be provided for access as and when required. ;
- taking a **paper-free, digital-first approach** to delivery with **minimal travel**, including conducting all internal, informal meetings over MS Teams in order that staff can join from a range of locations.

3.4 It should be noted that under the proposed agile model, the following arrangements will also apply:

- Fixed desks will be provided for people who can demonstrate a requirement for them;
- Council committee meetings and formal meetings e.g. HR hearings will normally be held face to face.

3.5 During the pilot phase of the model, contractual terms will remain unchanged which is supported by the Trade Unions and the following actions will be completed:

- All office-based staff will be required to develop a baseline (pre Covid) and proposed (post Covid) detailed workstyle profile with their line manager, as part of their Performance and development Plan for 2021/22;
- As a result of the workstyle assessment:
 - If an individual is willing to proceed as an agile worker:
 - the home/designated base must be risk assessed and agreed with their line manager;
 - information governance records must be updated to record the information assets and processing they are responsible for and how these will be kept secure;
 - performance objectives for the year should be set and weekly reviews begin;
 - working hours and patterns must be agreed and communicated across the team and service users.
 - If the individual wishes to remain a non-agile worker an application must be made for office-based desk space.
- The agile model is offered to Council and CCG staff only.

3.6 A comprehensive work programme is underway to ensure delivery of the pilot can be facilitated from the agreed timeframe, which includes reflection of the customer contact points, development of the digital agenda, application of supporting operational aspects and addressing the wider human resource implications. These will be progressed and reflected in the policy accordingly.

3.7 Over time, all office space will be vacated and either released for savings or re-provided as either shared space or allocated for specific service requirements. The first buildings to be re-provided will be office space within Bury Town Hall and 3 Knowsley Place.

3.8 The agile working model will be subject to regular, structured reviews with an initial review at month 3 and a formal review in December 2021.

4.0 Risks and Benefits

4.1 The following benefits, which will be evidenced and assessed and have been proven elsewhere and begun to be apparent through evaluation in Bury during the COVID evacuation are as follows, are anticipated:

- Reduction in running costs;
- Reduction in staff absence;
- Improvements in staff morale/engagement, through the facilitation of preferred working patterns and location;
- Greater workforce productivity by allowing people to work at a time and place that suits them;
- An improvement in workforce inclusion, which will directly support implementation of the joint inclusion strategy;
- A direct reduction in the carbon footprint which demonstrates leadership of the commitment to carbon neutrality in the borough by 2038

- 4.2 There are however some potential risks which will be monitored accordingly:
- A reduction in spend in the local economy, for example lunch time food purchases and after work social meetings;
 - A reduction of footfall in Council town centre facilities such as leisure centres and library use;
 - Staff preference for or productivity within an office site.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Governing Body is asked to
- note the update provided and specifically that an agile model is already in place within the CCG which will be enhanced further through this joint approach and refresh;
 - Support the roll out of the agile model for all staff on a voluntary basis, as described in this report from Stage 4 of the national roadmap out of lockdown, which is currently assumed to be 21 June 2021;
 - Note the Agile Working policy will be approved through the CCG's Remuneration Committee and appropriate Council governance arrangements; and
 - Note that the Council Cabinet are also receiving the pilot proposal for support.

Lynne Ridsdale
Deputy Chief Executive, Bury Council
May 2021