

From: **[REDACTED]**
Social Security Directorate
8 May 2017

Minister for Social Security
Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities

LOCATION ANALYSIS APPRAISAL CRITERIA

Purpose

1. To confirm you are content with the proposed approach being taken to appraise options for the location of the new Social Security Agency's central office(s) and to note the initial results from the preliminary stages of this analysis.

Priority

2. Urgent.

Background

3. In the Minister's statement to Parliament on 27 April, it was announced that the same multi-criteria framework used for the wider options appraisal would be used in assessing options for main agency location and that a decision on this would be announced in the autumn.
4. Analysts and Social Security Agency Implementation officials have been working together to design a process for determining the agency location. Although a multi-criteria based approach has already been announced, the details have not yet been formally agreed.

[REDACTED]

5. **[REDACTED]**

6. **[REDACTED]**

Phase 1 analysis

7. We have already completed a run through of Phase 1. During Phase 1, the proposed appraisal exercise used 32 Local Authority boundaries to establish the suitability of broad locations across the country. **[REDACTED]**
8. **[REDACTED]**
9. **[REDACTED]**
10. **[REDACTED]**
11. **[REDACTED]**

Local Authorities to be examined at Phase 2 analysis

12. To ensure a level playing field and a process that can deliver a defensible outcome within the required timelines we have made a decision not to accept individual bids from Local Authorities.

13. [REDACTED]

14. [REDACTED]

15. [REDACTED]

Next Steps

16. Subject to your approval of the approach and work undertaken to date we would propose to move to Phase 2 of the appraisal exercise and undertake detailed analysis of the shortlisted Local Authorities.

17. [REDACTED]

18. A further update will be provided at the completion of Phase 2 where in-depth analysis is undertaken on shortlisted Local Authorities.

Handling and Engagement

19. The full exercise to be completed in time to announce the agency location in the autumn.

20. Planning is underway for Local Authority engagement on co-location and local delivery over the summer prior to any announcement on the main agency location. Gaining a shared understanding of what local delivery will mean for each area should shift some attention from the current focus on jobs being created in the location of the main agency office.

Recommendations

21. You are both invited to note the contents of this submission and the supporting Annexes and:

- Confirm that you are content with our methodology for the process of determining the Social Security Agency location as set out in Annex A
- Confirm that you are content with the practical approach we have taken in Phase 1 of the process and the results that it produced.
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Social Security Directorate

[REDACTED]

8 May 2017

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness

[REDACTED]

Annex A

Social Security Agency Central Office – process for determining location

The Options Appraisal demonstrated that the best way to achieve the set out outcomes for social security is for the Agency to be responsible for a significant part of the delivery system and to do this in a centralised fashion, with advice and support agency staff dispersed across the public sector organisations (Hybrid X in the Options Appraisal). This means that the agency will take forward most of the delivery functions associated with social security centrally and hence require substantial new office space for its central office(s).

[REDACTED]

Annex B

Location Analysis – Phase 1 - Pre-appraisal

This note sets out the approach taken to complete the pre-appraisal Phase 1 of the multi-criteria analysis for the location of the social security agency and reports the results from this analysis.

[REDACTED]

Options

It was deemed suitable to use the Local Authority boundaries to compare broad areas. Initially, we intended to consider areas at a sub-LA level, where a LA covered a large and diverse geographical area, e.g. Highlands. However, during the initial stage of assessment it became apparent that looking at sub-LA areas did not add richness to the analysis and did not dramatically change the results. We therefore made the decision to treat areas within LA boundaries as one.

Process

Phase 1 process involved ruling out broad geographical areas based on qualitative evidence. The aim of Phase 1 stage of the process was to establish if there were **clear operational reasons** why a Local Authority area may be unsuitable for agency location.

The decisions were made based on both quantitative information and expert opinion. We held a range of internal workshops, which were attended by lead officials in the areas of social security agency implementation, regeneration, estates and digital policy. We gave thorough consideration to each Local Authority area, also taking into account the idiosyncrasies of each where appropriate.

[REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED]