

# Estate Strategy – Central Estate

March 2020

**Scottish Government**  
**ESTATE STRATEGY - CENTRAL ESTATE**  
**April 2019**

**Introduction by Derek Mackay, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work**

This document sets out an Estate Strategy for the central estate. It includes key objectives, underlying principles and measures of success and is intended to provide clarity on what is expected of organisations and their future property needs.

The central estate supports Scottish Government and its public body network in delivering public services across Scotland. Physical assets can also support the outcomes embedded in our National Performance Framework, contributing to local economic impact and provide the opportunity to connect and interact with the communities that we serve.

Planning ahead will ensure we have the right property and services in the right location, with the opportunity for a sustainable and well-managed estate.

The strategy builds on changes already achieved across central estate offices:

- A reduction in the total estate size of 25% between 2012/13 and 2017/18.
- A reduction in running costs of 27% over that period.
- A transition by many organisations to 'smart working' practices.

The strategy is key to ensuring a more corporate and collaborative approach to managing our assets, using them to create a transformative working environment to support a culture which underpins a great place to work. I commend it to you.

**Scope**

This strategy applies to the 'central estate'. While the 'local estate' is not directly within the scope of this strategy, increasingly a place based collaborative approach between the central and local estates will underpin public sector property planning.

Central Estate

- Scottish Government
- Directorates
- Executive Agencies
- Non-Ministerial
- Departments
- Executive Non-Departmental
- Public Bodies
- Advisory NDPBs
- Tribunals
- Commissions and Ombudsmen
- Other Significant National Bodies
- NHS National Health Bodies

Local Estate

- Local Authorities
- NHS Territorial Boards
- Emergency Services
- Higher/Further Education

## Success Measures

The Estate Strategy will be considered a success if:

- We maintain the right presence across a range of urban and rural locations, seeing evidence of more public-sector colocation.
- We are moving towards a fit for purpose, efficiently used and greener estate with an agreed definition of 'accessibility'.
- Our buildings support recruitment and retention, enable individuals and teams to deliver well.
- Value for money and financial sustainability are achieved.
- A consistent quality and approach to estates and facilities management services is delivered to our buildings, staff and visitors.
- Stakeholders feel that the strategy has been beneficial to their estate planning.

Progress will be reported through indicators, assurance and case studies.

## Objectives

The objectives for the central estate are set around three areas:

1. **Accessible, open to change and in the right locations, maximising co-location opportunities**
  - Accessible – offices and other sites are easy to get to for all staff (including those with disability and mobility issues). Buildings should support engagement with local communities.
  - Appropriate space – buildings will be provided in the right locations with the right footprint to meet operational needs.
  - Open to change – the central estate will change over time to reflect new/different user requirements and maximise co-location and sharing opportunities across the public sector.
2. **Sustainable and well managed, and supporting changing ways of working**
  - Sustainable – the central estate will be sustainable from financial, environmental, security, resiliency, condition and workforce perspectives. This will require a balance to be struck between these.
  - Well and consistently managed – staff and the public should receive a good level of service from the central estate. This should not vary significantly across properties and locations, with a minimum standard of service levels.
  - Supporting business delivery and changing ways of working – the central estate will be an enabler of changing ways of working, and able to support new ways of providing public services.

### 3. **Connected and flexible, attracting staff and supporting their wellbeing**

- Flexible and future proof – the central estate will be able to change as needed but will also be ‘ahead of the curve’. The estate will be usable now and into the future, with ongoing investment to ensure it remains in a fit-for-purpose condition.
- Attracting and retaining talent – the central estate will offer future and current employees a modern, stimulating workplace that supports their needs and wellbeing.
- Connected – the central estate will connect locations and support communities of interest across organisations and sectors. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) will support a flexible approach to working across the estate.

### **How will we achieve our Strategy?**

#### Principles

- Maintain an appropriate, accessible estates presence across urban and rural locations supporting public policy; within locations the footprint is optimised.
- Co-ordinated and consultative approach across the public sector to future estate planning which maximises co-location opportunities.
- Support business delivery, changing working practices and staff wellbeing.
- Robust data and management systems to monitor performance and inform decision making.
- Achieve a fit for purpose estate, which incorporates:
  - o Safe, secure and resilient facilities
  - o Environmentally sustainable helping to deliver Scotland’s carbon reduction targets
  - o Adaptable to future change
  - o Integrated and consistent estates and facilities management service delivery.
- Provide value for money to the public purse; the central estate is financially sustainable.

#### Data

- Strategic planning of the central estate requires to be underpinned by readily accessible and high-quality data.
- Organisations require to ensure that estate and workforce data is accurate, up to date and held in appropriate data management systems.

## Property Controls

- In considering future property needs, the presumption remains in favour of suitable solutions from within the central estate.
- Value for money considerations will go beyond the financial impact on an organisation and take into account the impact on the public purse as a whole.
- Business cases should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the project.
- The 'Property Controls' arrangement in place under the Scottish Public Finance Manual will continue to ensure appropriate review and scrutiny and ensure timely decisions are made within a wider strategic framework.

## Next Steps

The Smarter Workplaces Programme, working with Property Division and the Scottish Futures Trust will support Scottish Government and its public body network to deliver the Estate Strategy through the following:

1. **Engagement.** Work with organisations on the emerging strategic opportunities to deliver a more efficient estate.
2. **Smart Working.** Continue to share best practice in how the workplace can enable changing ways of working and support staff wellbeing.
3. **Data.** Identify an approach which supports the efficient collection of estates data and will support organisations with their estate management planning.
4. **Estates and Facilities Management.** Identify a more collaborative way of managing our estate, seeking out opportunities to pilot a new approach.

For more information [contact Scottish Government Property Controls Team.](#)

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EH1 3DG

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