Subject: New Ways of Working – Smart Working Policy

Report to: GLA Oversight Committee

Report of: Chief Officer	**Date: 3 September 2019**

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

1.1 In this report, the Chief Officer outlines proposals for a new Smart Working policy (**Appendix 1**). This policy builds on the 'direction of travel' paper New Ways of Working - 'Smart Working' presented to the Oversight Committee on 16 July 2019 (Background Paper 1) and incorporates feedback received to date.

2. Recommendation

2.1 **That the Committee responds to the Chief Officer on the proposal to introduce the new draft Smart Working policy.**

3. Background

3.1 The New Ways of Working – Smart Working 'direction of travel' paper presented to the GLA Oversight Committee on 16 July 2019 set out the background and rationale for a move to Smart Working: to support new ways of working, one of the Transformation Programme's three workstreams.

3.2 As described in that paper, the GLA's approach to smart working – a broader term than flexible working – involves investing in technology, more efficient use of office space, and equipping and supporting people so they can work from the most suitable location. The paper also set out principles to support new ways of working and outlined the benefits of it.

3.3 With input from the Transformation Programme working group, the Human Resources team have now prepared a Smart Working policy to support and enable the proposed new ways of working.

4. Issues for consideration

4.1 The Committee is asked to review and consider the new draft Smart Working policy. In drafting this policy we have considered the following points:

4.2   A new and more accessible style and language for policies is being developed for the 'root and branch' HR policy review committed to in the Transformation Programme. The Smart Working policy has been written in this new style and while there may well be further refinements, we propose that future policies will follow a broadly similar style, and we will ensure that there is consistency across the suite of HR policies.

4.3   It is written in plain English, in a direct and inclusive style, with an emphasis on enabling positive behaviour. Technical terms and acronyms are kept to a minimum and where used are explained. It aims to capture essentials which will, as far as possible, remain constant; the focus is therefore not on the introduction of smart working, but on how it will work in practice on an on-going basis.

4.4   In structure, the policy aims to be concise, with key points in the main policy and supplementary detail either outlined in annexes or held elsewhere, and a clear indication as to where this can be found. The policy references a number of new protocols and guidelines and one of these, the 'Office etiquette', has been attached as an Annex. The others referenced and under development include 'Working from other locations guidance', 'Health, safety and wellbeing guidance', 'IT protocol' and 'Smart working guidance for managers'. We plan to develop these with help from the workplace and engagement specialists and with input from Unison and staff.

4.5   We have reviewed and drawn on several existing GLA HR policies and guidelines, and once the Smart Working policy and related guidance have been finalised, obsolete policies and guidance will be removed from the intranet. In some cases, content will be taken and adapted from wider policies which are due to be reviewed separately. This includes Terms and Conditions of Employment, and the Code of Ethics and Standards for Staff (where the current IT protocols sit). The Health & Safety policy is also being reviewed and smart working will be reflected in it.

4.6   We have also looked at a range of external guidance including Cross-Sector Insights on Enabling Flexible Working (CIPD June 2019); The Way We Work – A guide to Smart Working in Government (2013); The Smart Working Handbook (2nd Edition); and TfL's Home working guidance and Work life balance policy.

Transformation plan expected outcomes

4.7   By way of additional context, the expected outcomes of the workstream (as set out in the Director's Decision 2375) include installation of a desk signposting system in City Hall and Union Street; workplace design and building works; fitting of new furniture where required; upgrade of 400 Surface Pro laptops; the issue of Surface Pro laptops and Apple iPhones to those who don't currently have them; reconfiguration of desk equipment and meeting rooms; and change management supported by an external provider.

4.8   In enabling and equipping people to work smartly from any location, we will support and expect managers and staff to embrace and adopt the cultural and behavioural change required, working together and across teams to ease pressure on office space for themselves and their colleagues. We will closely monitor this and, if necessary, reconsider our preferred approach to allowing working at home to be voluntary.

Communications and engagement

4.9   We have met twice with Unison to discuss the 'direction of travel' and the draft policy. They welcomed the opportunity to feed into the process as it develops and some of their suggestions and concerns are covered in the draft policy e.g. a statement that working from home is voluntary (although note the point above) and another that where staff need an adjustment to their working

arrangements because of a disability or health condition we will work with them to find effective solutions. Other issues raised which we are addressing include the importance of clear and timely communications, setting realistic timescales, ensuring the technology is available and works consistently, and helping managers support staff in a fair and effective way.

4.10 We will engage and communicate with employees about smart working and the culture change involved, using all our normal channels and potentially the development of specific transformation channels. We also intend to develop a change champion network to support the change in ways of working and to enable two-way feedback. We are planning to provide managers with specific support to help them demonstrate and enable new ways of working in their areas. We are seeking to appoint a specialist consultancy to support this work.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

4.11 Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations are central to the design of the transformation programme and due diligence will be taken through the transformation work to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

4.12 Smart working can contribute to compliance with the Act, as it ensures different working patterns and needs are more easily adopted and supported by the working environment. It will develop the GLA's reputation as a flexible employer, which is also highlighted and measured in the GLA's Diversity and Inclusion Action Standard.

4.13 To ensure that there is no potential for discrimination against specific groups, Unison and Staff Network representatives (including the newly formed GLA staff Disability network) will be invited to collaborate on the content and detail of the policy, particularly the related guidance and protocols.

5. Next Steps

5.1 In accordance with the GLA Head of Paid Service Staffing Protocol and Scheme of Delegation (the "Staffing Protocol"), formal consultation with Unison is required for the proposal to introduce a new Smart Working policy as it relates to changing the terms and conditions of employment of existing employees. Unison will therefore be consulted about the proposal to introduce a new Smart Working Policy. We will also consult with staff more widely, and engage with Staff Networks to ensure we are creating policies that are inclusive.

5.2 In accordance with paragraph 7.4 of the Staffing Protocol, this report sets out the proposal to introduce a new Smart Working policy and appropriate background information. The GLA Oversight Committee is therefore asked to respond to the proposed new Smart Working policy and note that progress will continue to engage with Unison and staff about it.

6. Legal implications

6.1 Under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended), the Head of Paid Service (the "HoPS") may, after consultation with the Mayor and the Assembly and having regard to the resources available and priorities of the Authority:

- appoint such staff as the HoPS considers necessary for the proper discharge of the functions of the Authority (section 67(2)); and

- make such appointments on such terms and conditions as the HoPS thinks fit (section 70(2)).

6.2   The Assembly has delegated its powers of consultation on staffing matters to the Assembly's staffing committee, currently the GLA Oversight Committee.

6.3   After consultation with the Mayor and the Assembly, the Staffing Protocol was adopted by the HoPS in November 2009 and revised in July 2018. The Staffing Protocol sets out the Authority's agreed approach as to how the HoPS will discharge the staffing powers contained in sections 67(2) and 70(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended).

6.4   Paragraph 7.2 of the Staffing Protocol says that, "The HOPS is responsible for determining terms and conditions for GLA staff (outside of the statutory officers and the Mayoral appointees) with the exclusion of staff transferred under a statutory transfer." Paragraph 7.1 of the Staffing Protocol says that "Terms and conditions for the purposes of this Protocol means terms and conditions of employment that apply to all GLA staff appointed by the HoPS and includes all employment policies and procedures (whether contractual or not)."

6.5   The introduction of a new Smart Working Policy as well as any changes to other policies and procedures and/or any changes to terms and conditions of employment that occur as a result would fall within the definition of 'determining terms and conditions' contained in the Staffing Protocol so would require approval from the HoPS and formal consultation with Unison. This report contains the proposed changes and appropriate background information and is required to be submitted to the GLA Oversight Committee (on behalf of the Assembly) under paragraph 7.4 of the Staffing Protocol.

7.   Financial implications

7.1   There are no specific financial implications arising from the GLA's adoption of the Smart Working policy. As particular proposals come forward as part of the implementation of the policy, they will be costed and budgeted for accordingly.

List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 - Smart Working policy

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers:
New Ways of Working- 'Smart Working'

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