

Terms of Reference of the Estates Strategy Committee



Background – the previous Building Development Board

1. As the number of projects and initiatives relating to The National Archives' premises and service offerings continued to grow and/or became more complex and intertwined, the need for a Building Development Board was suggested and was convened for the first time in May 2019.
2. The purpose of the Building Development Board was to provide strategic direction and overall governance for TNA's ongoing changes to the site, not only in terms of maintenance and improvements, but overseeing a co-ordinated approach to changes to the use of the site and its facilities.
3. Over time the Board developed organically into a reporting mechanism for capital projects delivery, covering a level of detail that detracted from its original strategic oversight role.
4. In July 2021, as The National Archives evolved its governance structure with a revised Executive Team composition, additional operational governance in place with the newly formed Operational Management Team, reformed Operations Board, and other initiatives running their day-to-day delivery (e.g. Visitor Experience and Commercial Development activities), the Building Development Board was put on hold temporarily to assess the future need.

Repositioning as the Estates Strategy Committee (ESC)

5. In December 2021, the original aims of the Building Development Board remained relevant, and it was felt that it was the right time to reposition into an Estates Strategy Committee, with a revised composition and Terms of Reference.
6. These terms of reference set out the scope and approach of the Estates Strategy Committee (the Committee) and defines the roles and responsibilities of its members.

Scope and purpose

7. The Committee's scope covers The National Archives' full estate, including Kew and DeepStore and any further sites that The National Archives (TNA) may have in its portfolio in the future.
8. Its purpose is to strategically and operationally support the Executive Team in delivering The National Archives' strategic vision as set out in *Archives for Everyone*, and its business priorities.

Status and relationship to the Executive Team

9. The Committee is a sub-committee of The National Archives' Executive Team with delegated authority for providing assurance that the organisation is managing development of its site(s) and its assets appropriately and effectively, including the management of risks.
10. The Committee will refer to the Performance Executive Committee (also an Executive Team sub-committee) when/if the scope, timeline or financial status of projects change from the approved budget provision or there are strategic risks to be considered.

Specific Responsibilities

11. The Committee will:

- Maintain and prioritise guiding principles for the use of The National Archives estate, including but not limited to
 - public spaces,
 - document storage (both onsite and offsite),
 - commercial development including digitisation growth and sub-letting,
 - office space planning to support hybrid working and other future ways of working,
 - physical space requirements and priorities to support provision of digital and IT hardware (e.g. server rooms),
 - Estates transformation works.
- Identify internal and external business changes or other factors that affect the Committee's guiding principles and plans.
- Identify interfaces and manage conflicting demands and priorities for space.
- Articulate and own strategic and operational oversight of TNA's full estate and provide assurance to the Executive Team.
- Review and challenge proposals to ensure that all estates development activity aligns to and furthers the Strategic Plan *Archives for Everyone*, The National Archives' brand and cultural change initiatives.
- Identify and manage the cultural challenges and associated risks.
- Take an active part in championing and supporting changes to the site through publicity and promotional activities.

Key Interdependencies

- Public Space Masterplan
- The National Archives Trust
- Exhibitions and events activities
- Education and family programme
- Visitor Experience
- Office Space Planning work and implementation of hybrid working / increased face to face working
- Estates annual priorities / capital maintenance projects
- Storage Strategy, including mid and longer term storage provision
- Commercial Activities and opportunities for commercial income (e.g. space letting)
- CSR and Capital Budget provision

Relationship with other bodies

12. The Committee's role in relation to other bodies is as follows:

- Estates Strategy Committee (Executive Team Subcommittee)
 - Considers and makes recommendations on all new proposals for development activity of the Estate.
 - Sets priorities and maintains a future forward plan of approved projects.

- Once budget and scope are agreed, escalation to the Committee is by exception only (budget, scope, or timeline significantly changes).
- Performance Executive Committee (Executive Team Subcommittee)
 - Monitors overall project delivery (monthly RAG status).
 - Agrees use of project contingency, or release to fund other projects if contingency is no longer required.
 - Re-allocates approved budget if and when required, considering the recommendations and priorities provided by the Estates Strategy Committee.
- Estates Project Governance Group (Cross-directorate group)
 - Manages day-to-day project delivery (e.g. progress to project plan, issues, and risks).

Exclusions

13. The following items are out of scope of the remit of the Committee:

- Routine site maintenance and replacement works which have an agreed budget, unless they involve a change in how space is used.

Role of the Chief Operating Officer

14. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is responsible for a wide range of financial, corporate and business critical functions at The National Archives and reports directly to and supports the Chief Executive and Keeper in exercising their duties and responsibilities as Principal Accounting Officer (PAO). Accordingly, the COO will Chair the Estates Strategy Committee and ensure its efficient functioning.

15. In relations to the Executive Team, they are responsible for:

- reporting on the performance and delivery of the Committee
- assessing and escalating matters and risks
- reporting on strategic considerations
- presenting decisions which require Executive Team approval
- proposing amendments/changes to these terms of reference

Membership

16. The Committee membership comprises:

- **Chief Operating Officer (Chair)** - Has full oversight and provides impartial support and challenge to the project Senior Responsible Owners (SROs).
- **Public Access and Government Services Director (SRO)** - Owns and leads the Storage Strategy, and has overall responsibility for changes to the public service reader offer and the document reading rooms.
- **Director of Research and Commercial Development (SRO)** - Owns and leads internal and on site partner led Digitisation activities, and feeds in to the Committee agreed Commercial Development opportunities that impact the site or may change use of spaces.
- **Director of People, Inclusion and Change (SRO)** - Owns and leads cultural change and inclusion initiatives, and ensures that these and any further people and cultural impacts are identified and represented in the guiding principles and forward plan.
- **Director of Public Engagement and Sector Leadership (SRO)** - Owns and leads the Public Space Masterplan, public engagement activities, Visitor Experience, and other business changes within the Public Engagement Directorate that may impact use of public spaces.

- **Digital Director (SRO)** - Owns and leads the Digital Strategy. Represents the Digital Directorate in terms of physical space requirements to accommodate digital assets (e.g. the Digital Records Infrastructure, server room).
17. The Chief Executive and Keeper will have an open invitation to attend meetings. They may also attend for a particular item only.
18. Also, in attendance will be:
- **Head of Estates and Facilities (Senior Supplier)** - Delivers physical development changes and estates maintenance projects. Feeds into the future pipeline of work, rather than to report on projects underway unless the Committee specifically asks for assurance.
 - **Head of IT Operations (Senior Supplier)** - Owns the IT Strategy. Identifies, delivers and supports IT hardware and software solutions for on site and offsite working. Feeds into the requirements for future ways of working, and any physical space requirements or changes to support IT Operations (e.g. server room).
 - **Head of Collection Care and Sustainability Lead (Senior Supplier)** – Leads on developing the Sustainability Strategy and action plan. Provides updates on progress and future plans for the Committee for assurance and endorsement.
 - **Head of Organisational Change and Development** – Organises the Committee meetings, takes notes and formal minutes so that a record of all meetings and decisions is maintained. Has a dual role in advising the Committee on business change issues and providing impartial challenge.
19. The Committee will seek advice from experts within the organisation, as appropriate.
20. The Committee reserves the right to invite other staff as required, either on a permanent or temporary basis.

Project Leads

21. Once estates development projects are approved by the Estates Strategy Committee, the identified leads have the authority to run their projects and initiatives on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Committee, and will typically report into their own project team and the Executive Performance Committee. The leads, and/or others, may be co-opted to the Estates Strategy Committee as and when needed to represent their projects and initiatives.

Meeting arrangements and governance

22. Meetings will be held quarterly to review and discuss the big picture of future development of The National Archives' estate. Extraordinary or more frequent meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair.
23. The Committee may consider matters out-of-committee, where appropriate.
24. The quorum for meetings is three Executive Directors. Should the Chair be unable to attend, they will appoint one of the attending Directors to chair in their absence.
25. Once estates development projects are underway with agreed scope, budget and timeline, Project Leads are empowered to deliver their projects in keeping with the Committee's guiding principles

and any associated estates development guidelines through their separate governance structures. Project Leads will only need to report further detail to the Estates Strategy Committee if required, to allow the Committee to be assured, to intervene, or to approve deviations in extraordinary circumstances.

26. The Committee will review new proposals at each meeting to approve or to recommend for approval to the Executive Team or, if needed, to advise how to address to better align with the Committee's guiding principles, UK [Government Functional Standard for property](#) and the Government Property Strategy. A pipeline of future work will be maintained and will also be reviewed by the Committee at appropriate intervals.
27. The meetings will be formally minuted to ensure a record of decisions is kept and be shared with the Executive Team for reporting/accountability.
28. Secretariat support will be provided by the Head of Organisational Change and Development or their nominee. They will be responsible for arranging and supporting the meetings and taking minutes.
29. The Head of Governance will provide corporate governance advice to the Committee, where required.

Standard Agenda

The standard agenda items for each meeting are:

- Storage
- Commercial Opportunities
- External funding which has implications for space (e.g. RICHeS)
- Public Space Masterplan activities
- Estates projects (where the scope, budget and timeline is not yet agreed)
- Office and operational accommodation, including future ways of working
- Sustainability
- Second site (updates on developments rather than having a governance role)

30. The standard agenda may be supplemented with additional items as and when appropriate. For example, as DeepStore is within the scope, the Committee could ask to receive annual updates on strategic and operational considerations.

Reporting

31. The minutes of the Estates Strategy Committee will be circulated to the Executive Team for review and noting. The Executive Team reserves the right for any item to be brought to it for further discussion.

Review

32. These terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the Committee to ensure they are live and relevant. Any significant changes will require the approval of the Executive Team.
33. These terms of reference will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Team every two years, unless the Committee has recommended significant changes in the interim period.

34. These terms of reference were last reviewed by the Committee in June 2024 and by the Executive Team on 25 July 2024.
35. The next scheduled reviewed by the Committee is June 2024 and the Executive Team July 2025.