



An Roinn Airegeadais  
Department of Finance

Securing  
Maximum Positive  
Benefit for Local  
Communities  
from the Public  
Service  
Decentralisation  
Programme



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# 1. Context and Key Considerations

## 1.1 Introduction

This is the report of a study commissioned by the Department of Finance Decentralisation Policy Unit from Fitzpatrick Associates, Economic Consultants. The report focuses on provision of advice on how to secure the maximum positive benefit for local host communities from implementation of the Public Service Decentralisation Programme.

The study methodology is outlined in Section 2. Throughout the research process our approach concentrated on learning lessons on, and developing proposals for, how best to secure maximum positive local impact from decentralisation. This approach was designed to provide a set of practical guidelines for use by the decentralising bodies and stakeholders in the host locations, and also central policy makers where appropriate, as required by the Terms of Reference.

The report is structured as follows:

- the remainder of Section 1 provides the context behind the study and identifies key considerations that help to frame the guidelines;
- Section 2 describes the methodology used and research undertaken in developing the guidelines;
- Section 3 examines the overall nature of local socio-economic impacts that can be facilitated by the guidelines;
- Section 4 presents a series of guidelines for use by decentralising departments and agencies to help ensure local socio-economic impact is maximised from the decentralisation process;
- Section 5 presents similar guidelines for local organisations in decentralisation locations;
- Section 6 outlines some other factors that are common to decentralising agencies and local agencies, as well as a number of issues meriting further consideration at central level by the Decentralisation Implementation Group.

## 1.2 Background and Context

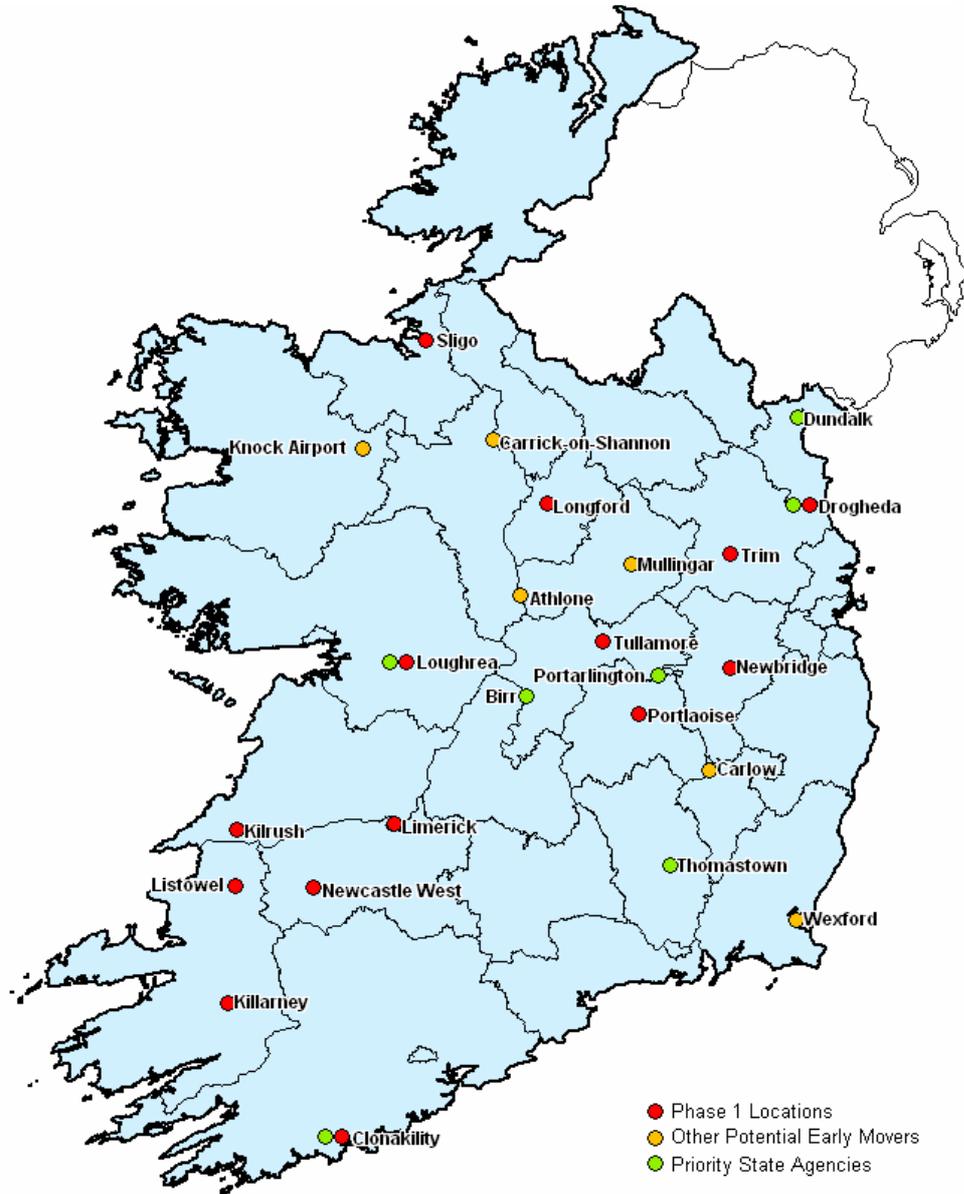
Securing maximum positive benefit for local communities is a key objective of the Public Service Decentralisation Programme. As set out in the Minister for Finance's budget speech of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2003, when announcing the Programme, the four key beneficiaries are seen as:

- the public service organisation involved;
- the staff that will transfer;
- the country as a whole;
- crucially, in the context of this report, the "communities to which they will be relocated".

For destination locations, the Public Service Decentralisation Programme offers a potential "shot in the arm" for their local economies. Furthermore, public service decentralisation also offers some distinct benefits that other similar-sized investment projects might not deliver, e.g. the official status and recognition involved in relocation of a State organisation, the potential to become a national policy-making location, and an inflow of high-quality public service jobs.

Successful decentralisation therefore merits planning before and during the implementation process to help ensure that the maximum positive benefit in practice is derived for the local communities, including decentralised staff and their families. With the decentralisation process progressing with the announcement of the first phase of moves in November 2004, highlighted in Figure 1.1 over the page, some guidelines with regard to this planning are seen as a useful input to the decentralisation process at this stage, hence the present report.

**FIGURE 1.1: HOST LOCATIONS IN PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PHASE 1**



Source: based on Decentralisation Implementation Group, Selection of Organisations/Locations for Inclusion in First Phase of Moves, 19 Nov 2004

## 1.3 The Present Study

The overall purpose of this project, as set out in the Terms of Reference, was to engage assistance *“to provide advice on how to help secure the maximum positive benefits for local communities in the decentralised locations.”*

Specifically, the Terms of Reference ask that the final report should include:

- *“best practice guidelines, incorporating practical planning steps, for use by departments and agencies in progressing their implementation plans;*
- *guidelines which could be made available to relevant local authorities (and other local interests) to help them identify steps which they might take to maximise the economic and social benefits associated with implementation of the programme;*
- *advice in relation to what steps might be taken by the Group and/or the Department of Finance both generally and in relation to specific cross-cutting issues.”*

## 1.4 What are the Guidelines?

The guidelines in later Chapters are intended as a “how to” guide for maximising the local benefit of decentralisation, i.e. they contain practical planning steps for both decentralising organisations and their host communities, which will help to both identify the potential effects and suggest how these might be maximised in practice. They therefore cover issues including:

- development of audits for relevant organisations to establish capacity for maximising local socio-economic benefits;
- procedures for interaction between the decentralising organisation (and its staff) and the host community;
- identification of the most appropriate office location from a local impact point of view;
- strategies for promoting further local investment/development to both facilitate and build on decentralisation;
- development of an appropriate local communications strategy;
- procedures for ongoing monitoring of the local impact of the decentralisation process.

In presenting guidelines, it must also be recognised that individual situations will differ, reflecting the nature of both the decentralising organisation and the host area, and that situations will evolve over time. The guidelines are therefore meant to represent a “menu” of possibilities, and to be both flexible and thought-provoking. They are designed not simply to be followed mechanically but also to stimulate those involved in the process to themselves develop practical approaches to maximising local benefits in their own specific context.

Flexibility will also relate to the amount of effort the parties involved may wish to devote to planning this aspect of the decentralisation process, which will in turn be affected by the perceived potential scale of impact and therefore the likely benefits from investment in planning for this.

## 2. Approach & Method Behind Guidelines

### 2.1 Audience for the Guidelines

The principal requirements and audiences for the guidelines are clear from the Terms of Reference. The aim is a series of practical guidelines and advice to secure the maximum local benefit from decentralisation aimed at three groups:

- **decentralising agencies and departments** – that can utilise them (referred to as DAD Guidelines in this report) in progressing their implementation plans;
- **local authorities, local stakeholders and local communities** – in order to help identify steps (referred to as LAS Guidelines in this report) that might be taken to maximise socio-economic benefits;
- **the Decentralisation Implementation Group and the Department of Finance** – to help address common or cross-cutting issues.

### 2.2 Underlying Principles

The central theme of our approach to the project and the guidelines has been to maintain a clear focus on specific, practical deliverables to stakeholders in the decentralisation process, i.e. how to maximise local positive impacts. Features of this approach have been included:

- (1) a focus as required on **“guidelines”** as distinct from a conventional report per se, i.e. practical “how to” steps that can be used by both decentralising organisations and their host communities;
- (2) tailoring these guidelines to complement **planning already in train**. For Government departments and agencies, the guidelines should dovetail with and ideally become a sub-set of their overall implementation programmes, while for host communities they could become a blueprint for the “benefit maximisation” component of any plans being prepared locally, or be a stimulus to such plans where none are being prepared;
- (3) emphasising the **synergy between the interests** of the host community, other stakeholders and the overall Programme. Maximising local impact is not a “zero sum game”, and it can complement other aspects of the decentralisation process, e.g. helping secure local employment for the partners of decentralising staff can both help to maximise local impact and also aid the decentralisation process;

- (4) a **broad definition** of local “benefits”, including both conventional economic (i.e. expenditure-led) ones but also other more intangible benefits such as confidence-building and community development;
- (5) related to (4), an emphasis not just on direct expenditure benefits but also on **maximising downstream dynamic effects** through increased investment in the area;
- (6) an emphasis on **early consideration of the issues**. Early consideration will aid maximisation of local impact and help avoid features that might minimise it. An example here might be that the specific location of a decentralised office within a host town could have an effect on its overall impact, a decision which once taken cannot easily be reversed;
- (7) an emphasis, as also envisaged by the Implementation Group, not just on host towns or communities themselves, but also on their **hinterlands**. This includes clusters of towns that could provide complementary services in the context of decentralisation;
- (8) the need, in planning maximum local impact, to adopt an approach **tailored to specific circumstances** and features of both the decentralising organisation and the destination;
- (9) **being realistic** about what can be achieved in practice, including avoidance of overly high expectations (e.g. about what a relatively small decentralisation can deliver locally) or of encouraging actions that might be very costly or inappropriate;
- (10) consciousness of the **distinct nature, mandate and constraints** on public service organisations when considering local impact and benefits, e.g. central public service bodies have national mandates and obviously cannot discriminate in favour of their host communities in core service delivery.

## 2.3 Method and Work Programme

The methodology and work programme for developing these guidelines involved a series of individual phases. These phases were outlined in our proposal for the study, and further refined and agreed at the inception stage. This section summarises the key phases. Full lists of consultees and literature reviewed are provided as Annexes 1 and 2.

**Inception:** The inception phase consisted of an initial meeting with the Department of Finance Decentralisation Policy Unit, identification of relevant basic material, and the production of a formal work programme. The inception stage has helped to refine the later work programme phases that followed.

**Review of Existing Central Material:** This phase involved examination of relevant existing material in relation to the decentralisation process. This included:

- Decentralisation Implementation Plans of those organisations selected for consultation during the study;

- Decentralisation Implementation Group reports;
- the factsheets produced for each host town by individual departments and agencies;
- other material on Departmental and host area websites;
- relevant IPA and other publications.

**Central Consultations:** This phase involved consultations with key organisations at national level. The consultations included key national informants and organisations directly involved in the decentralisations process.

Consultations with decentralising organisations involved a cross-section of different types of decentralising entities (i.e. large Government departments, small Government departments, sections of Government departments, State agencies), the geographical spread of decentralising organisations, and the varying scale of planned decentralisation (e.g. staff numbers). Departments and agencies with earlier experience of decentralisation were also included in the consultations.

Reflecting the project objective, the focus of the consultations was on generating practical ideas that can assist in formulating guidelines for decentralising organisations and host locations. The organisations consulted are listed in Table 1. An interview pro forma was used for the consultations (see Annex 3).

<b>TABLE 1: CONSULTATIONS WITH DECENTRALISING ORGANISATIONS</b>		
<b>Type of Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Host Area and Scale of Move (employment no.)</b>
Large departments	Department of Social and Family Affairs	Buncrana (118 staff), Carrickmacross (85), Donegal (258), Drogheda (478), Sligo (88)
	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Kilkenny (62), New Ross (125) Waterford (225), Wexford (258)
Sections of departments	Revenue Commissioners	Athy (250 staff), Kildare (379), Kilrush, Listowel, Newcastle West (50)
	Department of Education and Science	Athlone (108)
	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Carlow (313)
Small departments	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	Knock Airport (164)
	Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism	Killarney (141)
State agencies	Health and Safety Authority	Thomastown (111)
	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)	Clonakilty (94)

FÁS

Birr (391)

Other national consultees included OPW (given its central role in site and facility planning), IDA Ireland (regarding experience of local impact), the Marine Institute (whose decentralisation to Galway predated the PSDP), and Chambers of Commerce Ireland .

**Case Studies:** This phase involved case studies of selected host areas. The selection of host areas involved a mix of different types of areas in terms of size, location, and the nature of the decentralising agency. Whether or not the relevant decentralising agency was consulted during the central consultation phase was also considered.

The case studies involved discussions with relevant local area representatives, review of any existing relevant local documentation and publications, and discussions with specific local public and private service providers, e.g. estate agents, schools, employment agencies etc. The host areas were: Thomastown (111 planned jobs from the Health and Safety Authority); Birr (391 planned jobs from FÁS); Kilrush/Listowel/Newcastle West (50 jobs in each location from the Revenue Commissioners); Longford (159 jobs from Irish Prisons Service); Drogheda (673 jobs from Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, the Local Government Computer Services Board, the Department of Social and Family Affairs, REACH, and Comhairle). An interview pro forma for consulting local stakeholders was developed and is provided as Annex 3. In addition to case-study areas, contact was made with all other host cities/county councils.

**International Experience:** This involved a desk-based review of selected relevant international experience. Reflecting the project as a whole, this concentrated on the specific issue of the nature of local benefits and means of enhancing these, particularly through planning. The review of international experience has drawn on evidence from countries such as the UK and the Netherlands in particular.

**Previous Irish Experience:** Alongside international experience, this phase has examined specific cases of relevant Irish experience. Again, the focus here was on the specific topic of maximising local impact, and of practical guidelines in this regard. Consultations involved the Marine Institute and DoEHLG Ballina, the Department of Social and Family Affairs, and the Department of Education and Science. IPA publications on previous decentralisation experience were also reviewed.

**Analysis and Reporting – Production of Guidelines:** The above research phases, which combined consultation with relevant stakeholders in the decentralisation process with consideration of best practice in the past and in other international locations, was pulled together to derive a set of practical guidelines for both host areas and decentralising agencies in maximising positive benefits

for the relevant local communities in the future.

## 3. Potential Local Socio-Economic Impact

### 3.1 Nature of Local Socio-Economic Impact

Our framework for considering local socio-economic impact draws on the approach widely used in local economic impact studies generally, including decentralisation and relocation studies.<sup>1</sup> This framework, summarised in Figure 3.1, envisages three broad levels of economic benefits from major local interventions:

- **direct effects**, e.g. direct expenditure in local shops, which arise from the expenditure in the area by the relocated organisation and its staff and their families;
- **indirect effects**, e.g. purchases of additional supplies locally by local shops, which arise due to effects from this expenditure through the supply chain linkages;
- **induced effects**, e.g. the wider knock-on economic effects on local incomes and employment, that arise as a result of the wealth generated by the direct and indirect effects.

FIGURE 3.1: LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RELOCATION EXPENDITURE EFFECTS



### 3.2 Typology of Potential Local Impacts

While this expenditure-led framework is a good starting point, in the context of Irish public sector decentralisation it is necessary to go beyond it and consider less tangible impacts which may arise for other aspects of the local economy and society. These could include, for example, cases where the viability of a local school might be enhanced by increased numbers, where new local public transport services might be made viable (e.g. a taxi/hackney service), as well as even less tangible effects such as the symbolism of government support, increased local confidence, or reassurance to other investors that the location is going to remain attractive.

<sup>1</sup> Experian, *the Impact of Relocation, A Report for the Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation*, January 2004, part 2. Birmingham City Council, *Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation, Evidence Submitted by Birmingham City Council*, 2003.

Reflecting this broader approach, we set out in Figure 3.2 below a typology of the kind of local benefits that can in principle result from decentralisation, and which the Guidelines are therefore designed to identify and promote. Five different types of effects are listed, the first two relating to expenditure as already discussed above, and the others relating to wider spin-off effects. We also show whether these benefits are likely to be short-term or long-term.

**FIGURE 3.2: TYPOLOGY OF POSSIBLE LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF DECENTRALISATION**

Type of Benefit	Short-term	Long-term
<b>“Direct Expenditure”</b>		
▪ construction/set-up, e.g. building expenditure, purchase of equipment	●	
▪ by re-located public servants, families, e.g. housing, shopping, etc	●	●
▪ by re-located organisation, e.g. supplies, services	●	●
▪ by commuters, visitors, meetings, e.g. in hotels, restaurants, filling stations	●	●
<b>“Indirect Economic Spin-off” (indirect and induced)</b>		
▪ urban regeneration, e.g. decentralised office as part of a renewal scheme	●	●
▪ skills upgrade, e.g. via re-located partners’ availability to work locally		●
▪ increased demand for new services, e.g. childcare, business services	●	●
▪ improved image, inward-investment, increased visitors		●
<b>“Service Improvements”</b>		
▪ IT/Broadband, i.e. organisation will create new demand	●	●
▪ public services, e.g. education, public transport may become more viable		●
▪ leisure, sports, etc may be upgraded		●
<b>“Community Development”</b>		
▪ civic participation by re-located public servants/families, e.g. joining clubs, development groups		●
▪ increased confidence, e.g. the existence of a government office		●
<b>“Clustering Effects”</b>		
▪ complementary services in neighbouring towns/surrounding areas		●

### 3.3 Drivers of Positive Local Impacts

Section 3.2 set out a typology or classification of types of potential local impacts. The core task of these Guidelines is to identify steps through which both decentralising bodies and host areas might help to maximise these impacts. To help identify such steps it is therefore necessary to have a view on the underlying factors that might help to maximise the benefits, so that actions might then be directed towards these potential drivers of local impact. Based on our research we set out below a series of broad conclusions in this regard which then “guide the guidelines”, i.e. point towards actions which might be taken.

#### Key Drivers of Local Benefits – Summary

- decentralising organisations and host area representatives understanding each others’ situations, needs, expectations, problems;
- the larger the decentralising body relative to the host area the larger the potential impact;
- decentralising organisations come at a pace and size that facilitate local absorptive capacity, i.e. avoid bottlenecks, driving up prices, etc;
- maximum number of family members incoming public servants re-locate to or near the destination rather than commuting (although in a commuting context benefits are also possible);
- the maximum numbers of family members (spouses, partners and other family members) also locate to the area;
- that senior staff relocate;
- higher skill level staff (and other family members) locate;
- maximum local social and civic engagement is achieved;
- the incoming organisation sources as much as possible of appropriate supplies and services locally, e.g. stationery, IT services, etc (within public procurement rules)
- relocated offices are near to town centres;
- consideration is given to local impact issues early, before key irreversible implementation decisions are taken;
- the more consideration given to the issue the greater the positive local benefit (and less any negative effects).

### 3.4 The Scale of Decentralisation

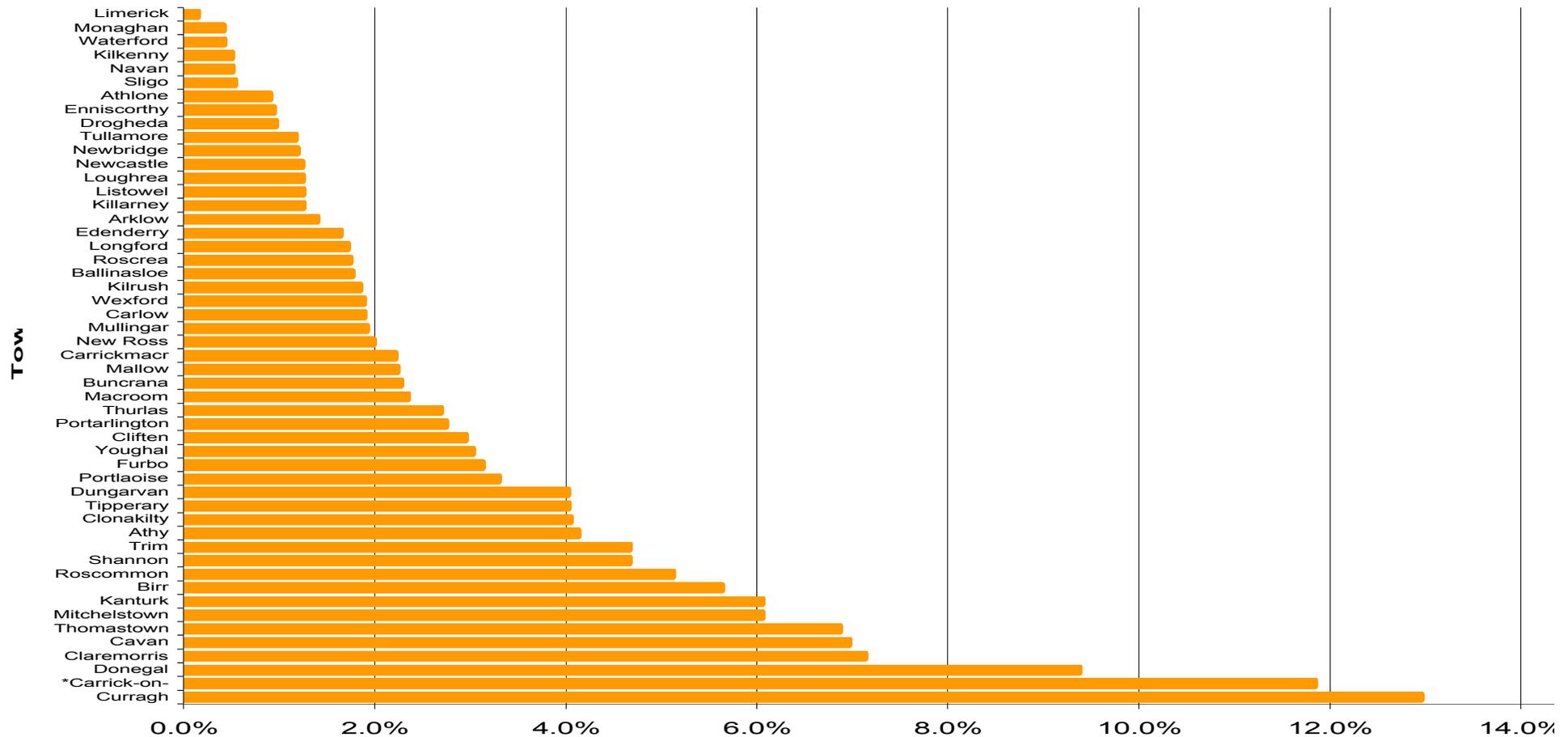
Within the key drivers of decentralisation, the size of the decentralising body relative to the host area will be a significant determinant of future local socio-economic impact of decentralisation. Where the numbers of staff represent a significant proportion of the host location’s resident population, the potential impact on the town’s retail base, services, housing market, etc. could be expected to be much more significant than in a location where the marginal effect on population is relatively small (after also taking into account the potential relocation of the families of staff).

As a rough indicator of the relative significance of planned decentralisations, Fig. 3.3 shows decentralising staff numbers as a percentage of resident populations in host locations. This figure is indicative only. It is based on the original numbers as announced in December 2003. It does not allow for staff who may live elsewhere, nor for family members also moving to the area. The

diagram highlights that in towns such as Donegal and Carrick-on-Shannon decentralisation could bring staff into the town equivalent to around one-tenth of the population. If all of these people relocate to the towns with their families, this could increase the local populace by around a fifth. In instances like these, the potential impact of the process is very significant, and highlights why the maximisation of this impact requires attention.

SECURING MAXIMUM POSITIVE BENEFIT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE DECENTRALISATION PROGRAMME

FIGURE 3.3: PLANNED DECENTRALISATION NUMBERS RELATIVE TO LOCAL RESIDENT POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



**Note:** % relate to planned decentralisation numbers (in Dec. 2003 Budget Statement) relative to locally resident populations in 2002 Census. This is an indicator of relative sizes only. Not all decentralised staff may live in the immediate area, while family of staff may also relocate.  
\*= Carrick-on-Shannon

### **3.5 Timescale of Impacts**

Throughout the consultation process undertaken as part of this study, most representatives of decentralising organisations acknowledged that there would be notable local socio-economic benefits as a result of decentralisation. A significant proportion of these benefits will be realised relatively quickly, via direct expenditure from relocated staff. However, it was also noted that it could take time for the full extent of the local impact to be realised, in some instances perhaps between 15 and 20 years. This was attributed to a likely tendency of people to commute rather than relocate in the short term (although this is only relevant for some of the host locations), and the natural attrition rate of the organisation that may see new recruits more willing to live in or around the host location as they commence employment. It will be important therefore, when measuring the success of decentralisation post-relocation, that a longer-term outlook is adopted.

### **3.6 Quantification of Possible Benefits**

The previous sections have provided an examination of the nature and type of local socio-economic impacts that might be realised from decentralisation, the key drivers of these impacts, the influence of the scale of relocation, and the timescale within which these particular impacts might expect to be realised. The quantification of such impacts is problematic given the lack of any established analysis on this matter and given the very unique circumstances involved in decentralisation, a process involving the transfer of jobs rather than the direct creation of new jobs. We have, however, been able to identify a limited number of sources that have examined the specific local impacts that result from decentralisation.

The IPA produced a report in 1988<sup>2</sup> that provided research on previous decentralisation in Ireland, looking both at the process of relocation and its impact. It concluded that “all host areas were perceived to have received some economic boost because of the relocation of staff. The perceived impact was generally related to the number of relocated staff and their settlement pattern.” Of the towns considered, specific impacts were identified from decentralisation to Athlone, which was gauged to have enjoyed the most direct economic benefit. It noted that most staff had elected to reside in the town itself, with full-time and temporary clerical jobs created, and that local businesses had experienced an upturn in sales as a result. Social benefits such as increased participation in community activity were also realised. In Castlebar, similar social impacts were experienced, together with the realisation of some benefit for local businesses.

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<sup>2</sup> *Decentralisation: the Civil Service Experience* – Laraine Joyce, Peter C. Humphreys, Ann Kelleher. Institute of Public Administration, 1988.

This specific evidence of actual local impacts from decentralisation has been confirmed anecdotally via consultations with representatives of organisations that have undertaken some form of decentralisation in the past, with the facilitation of complementary local development in and around decentralisation sites perceived as one such effect in Athlone as a result of the relocation of the Department of Education and Science.

In the UK the Lyons Review<sup>3</sup>, an independent review of public sector relocation, commissioned international research into decentralisation and found that some of the local impacts identified above were apparent in other countries. In Scotland it was found to have generated local economic benefits in areas of relative socio-economic need, encouraging employers previously reluctant to relocate operations to such locations to reconsider their thinking. In France specific local positive benefits were identified in raising the image of the area and stimulating the economy, particularly with regard to direct or induced effects of employment discussed in Section 3.1.

As part of the Lyons Review, Experian consultants were commissioned to undertake a study on the impact of relocation<sup>4</sup>. This study found that the local economic benefit of relocating government functions was more significant than previously perceived. It identified broader, less tangible benefits to host areas including the development of local skills, additional investment, and increased local confidence.

#### **THE LOCAL IMPACT OF DECENTRALISATION**

“Relocation implies a significant boost for skills and investment, which are both key drivers of regional productivity. The more senior posts moved, the greater the injection of skills into the area. This could be expected, over time, to create a flow of learning to other sectors, through networking and turnover of staff....We also found that public sector relocation can develop confidence in the future of an area, perhaps stemming a spiral of decline, or contributing to the successful regeneration of a deprived area. A public sector presence can encourage qualified people to stay, and can act as a catalyst for further investment by reducing the risk facing potential investors”

The Impact of Relocation – A Report for the Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation.  
Experian, January 2004

Experian also examined the indirect and induced employment effects of relocated jobs, taking into account displacement. They compared local “multipliers” derived from previous decentralisation processes. A selection of these findings is provided in Table 3.1.

<sup>3</sup> *Well Placed to Deliver? Shaping the Pattern of Government Service – Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation.* Sir Michael Lyons, March 2004

<sup>4</sup> *The Impact of Relocation – A Report for the Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation.* Experian, January 2004.

**FIGURE 3.1: SUMMARY OF LOCAL MULTIPLIERS DERIVED FROM DECENTRALISATION PROCESSES**

<b>Research</b>	<b>Local Multiplier</b>
Ashcroft research into ODA relocation to East Kilbride	1.25
Gillespie research into general Scottish decentralisation multiplier effects	1.50
Enterprise Zone Research study on local multipliers for office-based employment	1.29
Experian estimate of DHSS relocation to Leeds	1.30

This highlights the fact that decentralisation can generate a positive knock-on local economic impact by creating indirect and induced effects on employment. Experian note that, taking these findings into account, host areas would “probably, but not necessarily, benefit from public sector relocation.”

Assuming the multipliers in Figure 3.1 apply in Ireland, they mean that for every 100 public servants who relocate to an Irish town, between 25 and 50 additional new jobs could be created locally as a result of increased expenditure and wider investment and spin-off benefits.

# 4. Guidelines for Departments & Agencies

## 4.1 Introduction

This section sets out a series of guidelines or planning steps that should be undertaken by decentralising departments and agencies, as part of their overall implementation plan. A key to maximising benefits will be understanding the nature of both the incoming organisation and the host community. These guidelines therefore cover:

- an audit of key relevant features of their own organisation, including external linkages;
- an audit/socio-economic profile of the location to which they are going and key considerations arising from this;
- a checklist of possible actions which could be undertaken to ensure maximum impact in the local area through spending, residency, etc.

In the sub-sections below we consider how both audits might be undertaken, and examine the practical steps that should flow from this audit process and from more general planning of activity that will help ensure that the local socio-economic impact is maximised. A summary of all the guidelines is provided in Section 6.4.

## 4.2 Audit of Own Organisation

***DAD Guideline 1 – A short audit of the decentralising organisation should be undertaken in order to ensure that management understand the ways in which they could generate positive local socio-economic benefits and hence plan activity accordingly.***

The organisations that are decentralising differ widely in nature, particularly in terms of the type of positions that are being relocated. A specialised state agency with a very specific remit and a number of existing regional bases may have a significant proportion of staff already in the habit of travelling around the country as part of their everyday working practices. In other cases, however, such as a major central department, the decentralising functions may have previously involved work almost solely based in Dublin, with little mobility around the country, and hence immediately this creates a different culture within the organisation. By undertaking an audit of the nature and specific characteristics of the decentralising functions of the agency or department, the foundation can be provided from which local socio-economic benefits can be maximised.

From our consideration of the range of factors that will affect the decentralising department or agency's ability to generate local impacts, we have identified a number of issues that should be examined in turn as a first course of action. These are outlined in the audit diagram in Figure 4.1.

**FIGURE 4.1: AUDIT OF ORGANISATION TO ESTABLISH POTENTIAL FOR LOCAL IMPACT**

Step	Activity	Relationship to Local Socio-Economic Impact
1	<b>Nature</b> i.e. government department or agency and what it does;	Extent to which employees will remain in location during the working day, extent of visitors from elsewhere, origin of clients, etc. will all affect direct expenditure.
2	<b>Size</b> both in absolute terms and relative to the destination	The number of staff relocating will have a clear impact in terms of direct expenditure and indirect economic spin-offs, and if they represent significant proportion of overall population, service improvements & community benefits could result.
3	<b>Functions</b> whether it is a complete organisation, or part of an organisation;	This can affect the ability to purchase locally, the relationships with other parts of the organisation, and the origin of clients, all of which may exert a local impact.
4	<b>Previous Experience</b> whether sections are already decentralised elsewhere, or are now also decentralising to other locations;	Past experience of decentralisation may help in understanding local dynamics, what local socio-economic impacts might be achievable, how best to achieve them, and a realistic timeframe for doing so.
5	<b>Staff Skills</b> the nature of its personnel and skills complement;	The higher the grades of staff involved in the decentralisation process, the higher the income levels, and hence the greater the potential for local socio-economic impact.
6	<b>Staff Mobility</b> The degree to which staff are currently office-based, location of agencies with which they interact.	Will determine how much staff spend in the local economy, their transport infrastructure requirements, potential in-flow of visitors from agencies in other locations.
7	<b>Supply Needs</b> its interaction patterns, including purchases of services and supplies	Needs will determine the extent to which services and supplies (e.g. stationery, IT support, catering, printing, etc) can be purchased locally, injecting income into the local economy.
8	<b>Site Location</b> to where exactly in the town it is locating	Out-of-town location could mean that staff have little interaction with local retail and service outlets, while a town centre location may generate direct expenditure effects, indirect economic spin-offs (including potential urban regeneration) & service improvements.
9	<b>Premises</b> the specific needs in terms of premises in order to ensure that efficiency of operations maximised in the new location	The nature of the premises will not only impact upon the scale of direct construction benefits, but maximising the efficiency of operations can have positive benefits in terms of staff retention, and a high-quality building will improve the image of the host location.
10	<b>Information</b> the mechanisms through which information can be conveyed to decentralising staff.	Existing communication mechanisms can facilitate the flow of information to staff about the available services in and around the host location.

All of the steps above can be easily based on existing management knowledge, and will not represent a major time-consuming task. However, they should help to formalise the areas in which each department or agency could be expected to generate some type of socio-economic impact, and in turn help focus planning of specific impacts as the decentralisation process progresses.

## 4.3 Audit of the Host Location

***DAD Guideline 2** – Working with local stakeholders, an audit of the host location, investigating the availability of key infrastructure, services and amenities in it and its surrounding area, should be undertaken in order to ensure that any gaps in this regard can be identified and solutions found.*

In encouraging potential local socio-economic impact, it is important that an understanding of the nature of the host location is developed by incoming agencies and departments. Examination of organisations that have undertaken decentralisation in the past have indicated that the potential to generate such local impacts is determined by a number of factors, including size of the host location and its hinterland, its retailing and service base, and the commitment and organisation of the local community.

An audit of key characteristics of the host location would therefore be of benefit to the organisation, to understand how best impacts might be generated, and flag any potential weaknesses or gaps in the location's "portfolio" that might limit such impact. The audit should involve a number of simple steps, based on a combination of national and local level sources of information, some of which may have been undertaken as part of the CAF exercise. These steps are shown in Figure 4.2.

Some basic profiles of host areas have already been prepared. While welcome, these are typically quite brief and mostly relate to descriptive information on local services. A somewhat more in-depth understanding needs to be gained of local socio-economic situations, key local issues and priorities, and local perceptions and expectations.

**FIGURE 4.2: AUDIT OF HOST LOCATION TO ESTABLISH POTENTIAL FOR LOCAL IMPACT**

Step	Activity	Relationship to Local Socio-Economic Impact
1	<b>Size</b> their overall size, in both absolute terms and relative terms;	Will influence such factors as retail/service base, schools, leisure facilities, etc, that can be accessed by relocated staff, and other effects such as house price changes may be apparent if host is small relative to numbers moving.
2	<b>Hinterland</b> the nature of the hinterland, e.g. proximity to other towns;	If services are not available within host location, they may be available elsewhere in the hinterland. People may also choose to live in the hinterland rather than the host location itself.
3	<b>Housing</b> the availability of housing and the local housing market;	The housing stock, both in terms of what is currently available and that planned for development, will determine the location of decentralised staff and may affect house prices if base is relatively small.
4	<b>Retailing and Services</b> the nature of their service base, e.g. retailing, hotels, etc;	The base of retailing and services within the host location and hinterland will determine the amount of direct expenditure that can be generated locally, with a poor base likely to cause leakage to other larger locations.
5	<b>Education and Training</b> access to education and training facilities;	The availability of education & training facilities will be of keen interest to decentralising & potentially decentralising staff and a full understanding of local schools & colleges, and those within the wider region, will be important.
6	<b>Transport Infrastructure</b> local and regional transport, including public transport.	The availability of transport infrastructure will be important in facilitating access to Dublin & other work destinations from the host town, & helping staff to understand how easily certain places can be accessed.
7	<b>Social Infrastructure</b> social infrastructure such as clubs, voluntary organisations, churches, etc;	Important in the integration of people into the local community, encouraging them to spend the majority of their time there, and increasing the chances of remaining in the host location in the medium to long term.
8	<b>Leisure and Recreation Facilities</b> leisure and recreational facilities, restaurants, sports facilities.	Staff moving to the host location or hinterland will want to use local leisure and recreational facilities, and information provided about the availability of these will facilitate access.
9	<b>Culture</b> proximity to theatres, museums, tourist attractions, festivals.	Similarly staff moving to the host location or hinterland will want to enjoy local cultural facilities, info provided about the availability of these will facilitate access. Festivals & tourist attractions will also generate interest.
10	<b>Social Structure</b> the social structures, including average income levels, levels of social exclusion	Will influence the propensity of staff to live in the host location or other more desirable commutable location. The potential availability of other employment opportunities for family members may also be affected.
11	<b>Demographics</b> demographic features including size, trends, etc;.	Will indicate factors such as whether the host location has a young or growing population, which will all have economic effects that will be compounded by the arrival of a base of new residents.
12	<b>Economy</b> the nature of the local economy, including employment, unemployment and major local employers.	Will influence the employment opportunities available to family members, the state of the housing market, retail base, available services, etc.
13	<b>Dublin Proximity</b>	Affects the potential for staff commuting rather than

	proximity to organisations' existing Dublin locations	re-locating, and may change nature of maximising impact – concentrate on maximising “day spend” while in location.
	<b>Key Local Issues</b> Local plans, priorities, expectations	Will indicate the direction in terms of development that the host location is expected to move towards in the future, and raise issues of relevance to decentralising staff.

As with the audit of the organisation, many of these steps should be relatively easy to undertake, based on existing knowledge and readily available information. Assessing these and other features will include quantitative information, but also involve gaining a qualitative understanding of existing local structures and dynamics and key drivers of the town. The key to undertaking the audit is to **understand** how this information affects the potential of decentralisation to impact upon local development, and thus to adjust and focus planned activity accordingly.

## 4.4 Actions to Maximise Local Impact – Pre-Relocation

A key feature of these guidelines involves translating the types of considerations included in both of the above audits into planning steps that can be undertaken during the implementation phase, as well as into subsequent ongoing monitoring. The following subsections examine a series of practical actions that could be undertaken in order to maximise the local socio-economic impact of decentralisation.

### 4.4.1 Location

#### Central Locations

**DAD Guideline 3** – *The site selection process should continue to take account of the fact that a prominent town centre (or near centre) location for the decentralised operations would generate significant local socio-economic benefits.*

Securing an appropriate location within the host town for the decentralised office has been identified as being of importance to boosting local socio-economic impact. In establishing a prominent town centre location for a national government department or state agency, a number of direct expenditure, indirect economic spin-off, and community development effects, as identified earlier in Figure 4.1, may be facilitated. A direct link with urban renewal is also possible where circumstances permit, with complementary development opportunities being stimulated.

Inevitably an office located in a town centre in close proximity to the bulk of local retail and service outlets will increase the capacity for direct expenditure by relocated public servants with the convenience of shopping, dining and use of personal services during lunchtime or after working

hours. A town centre location should guarantee the presence of local restaurants within the immediate area that will can be used for entertaining clients or partner organisations and typically a sizeable hotel that may facilitate meetings, events and overnight stays for visitors to the department or agency. It could also act as a catalyst to town centre regeneration and enhancement, attracting new business investment as entrepreneurs identify the opportunity for potential new customers generated from a sizeable base of people present within that location.

There may of course be situations where such a location is not possible as a consequence of, for example, traffic issues or the lack of a suitable site. Even then, a high profile location within walking distance, allowing easy and flexible use of local services, would still be desirable. Such an objective is already reflected in central guidance on site selection, included within “Principles to underpin Accommodation Acquisition Strategy”, agreed by the Decentralisation Implementation Committee and the Cabinet Sub-committee on Decentralisation. These principles promote the procurement of buildings that “are close to a wide range of excellent amenities and facilities” and “contribute positively to the town’s urban fabric and sense of place”. The Office of Public Works has confirmed that these are central considerations in selecting the location of the decentralised office within the host area. Sites have already been selected on the basis of these principles, with a number in town centre locations, and as sites continue to be identified and selected for decentralisation purposes, such principles should continue to underpin the selection process along with an explicit consideration of how the location will impact upon local socio-economic development.

## **Developing a Focal Point**

***DAD Guideline 4 – When considering the nature of the premises to be established under decentralisation, consideration should be given to potential urban renewal benefits of developing a high-profile, modern focal point within the host location.***

Throughout the consultations with decentralising agencies and departments, the importance of securing high-quality, purpose-built premises in the host location was identified as a critical element in motivating staff to move, improving organisational efficiency, and securing long-term commitment of staff to their employment post-decentralisation. However it was also noted that an impressive, well designed and modern building could also facilitate further knock-on local socio-economic benefits. These would include induced economic spin-off effects such as new investment in retailing and services in surrounding buildings due to an improved physical environment. More social and community development related effects could also result such as improved confidence from a new high-quality focal point for the town improving its image to both local residents and those visiting the town. Again the site selection process undertaken by the Office of Public Works

has indicated that such considerations remain high on the agenda when bringing forward decisions. The development of high-quality premises to improve the urban fabric of a town and act as a focal point around which further renewal works could develop has the potential to trigger off substantial future local socio-economic growth.

## **4.4.2 Organisation-Host Town Dynamics**

### **Early Interaction**

***DAD Guideline 5 – There should be early interaction between the destination host community and its representatives in the planning of the move, and regular contact throughout the planning phase.***

If local socio-economic impact is to be generated, it is important that key local stakeholders and the department or agency maintain a process of interaction throughout the planning phase, sharing knowledge, ideas and practical supports that will encourage decentralising staff and indeed the organisation itself to become fully integrated into the local community and maximise their contribution to the economy.

Key elements of this will involve:

- Interaction by the decentralising agency at senior level;
- Interaction not just with “officialdom” locally, but also with community and business representatives;
- Interaction at local, not just county level;
- Frequent interaction, not just a one-off visit.

### **Risk Analysis**

***DAD Guideline 6 – A risk analysis should be undertaken in relation to local community relations and steps should be taken to address any local concerns.***

Of course, while decentralisation is largely viewed as a positive experience for host communities, there are issues that could cause friction between them and decentralising bodies. Concern that an influx of people will hit house prices, that the local jobs market may tighten due to the arrival of staff’s families, and conversely that staff will commute and have minimal levels of integration with the local community, have all been cited as potential negative effects of the decentralisation process. It is important that the potential for such risks are examined, with steps taken to minimise them and allay local fears.

### **4.4.3 Understanding Staff Perceptions, Needs, Motivation and Skills**

#### **Understanding Local Needs of Staff**

***DAD Guideline 7** – A consultation exercise should be held with prospective and actual decentralising staff regarding their needs, motivations and expectations of the host area.*

Ultimately decentralisation generally is a “people business”, and this dimension will have a crucial influence on local impact. As stated earlier, local impact will be affected by the extent to which staff relocate (rather than commute), and will benefit from a high level of staff morale and enthusiasm among relocated staff. Achievement of the overall Public Sector Decentralisation Programme and maximising its positive local impact therefore correspond closely in this regard.

The challenge here will be complicated by the likely wide variety of views and motivations of individual staff (and their families) reflecting a variety of factors such as age, career-point, family status, place of origin, interests, relationships, etc. If their specific needs can be gauged and understood, it will assist in facilitating access to the right type of supports and services to make relocation as smooth a process as possible, and in building contacts between staff and local service providers. A consultation process with staff who wish to decentralise or who still view it as an option would be beneficial in this regard. It would also be beneficial to ensure that there is ongoing monitoring of staff views post-relocation in order to establish how the exercise has managed to impact upon the local community and if any further steps are needed to meet ongoing needs.

#### **Local Education and Training Provision**

***DAD Guideline 8** – Discussions with local education and training providers should be held in order to establish whether any relevant training is currently being offered or whether there is potential for appropriate education and training opportunities to be provided in the future.*

A further issue that might be considered in the lead-up to the relocation of offices is whether local educational institutes currently offer training courses that are relevant with regard to the needs of staff, or whether they are interested in providing specific courses that will relate to the specific skills required by the organisation from newly recruited staff in the medium to long term. By entering into early dialogue with educational institutions, they will be able to plan activity accordingly and perhaps contribute positively to the meeting of the organisation’s skills requirements in the future.

## 4.5 Actions to Maximise Local Impact – Post-Relocation

### 4.5.1 Organisation Trading

#### Local Sourcing

***DAD Guideline 9** – An examination of service requirements should be undertaken giving consideration to what could be purchased locally (within public procurement guidelines).*

Evidence from previous decentralisation projects, and from agencies that have established and operate local and regional offices, have suggested that it is essential to build up goodwill within the communities in which they operate. One key mechanism for doing this has been identified as local sourcing, as far as they are available, of goods and services. It was noted that there are areas where local purchasing might be feasible, such as postage and stationery, maintenance, printing, catering and IT. These are all examples of services where local suppliers may exist and can be utilised, subject of course to the usual procurement rules. Understanding just where such local provision can be sought would help in the generation of local impact.

#### Access for Local Customers

***DAD Guideline 10** – If the organisation conducts direct transactions via their office-based locations, consideration should be given to how clients and customers located in proximity of the new location can be encouraged to take advantage of such services.*

Many organisations have clients or customers that conduct transactions directly by dropping in on the office location. The relocation of the offices will clearly adversely affect the ability of Dublin-based clients and customers to take advantage of such direct facilities. However, it could also open up the potential for such face-to-face transactions for potential or actual clients or customers based in other parts of the country. If such facilities are promoted to these groups located within an easily accessible distance of the new decentralised offices, this could bring clients and customers into the host location.

Note: this does not imply any preferential treatment, only provision of the type of face-to-face service already available at existing offices.

#### Meeting and Event Venues

***DAD Guideline 11** - Where there is flexibility as to where meetings or events to take place, care should be taken to ensure that a reasonable proportion of them are held in the host area.*

One further consideration is the risk of local impact of decentralisation diminishing as a consequence of the department or agency continuing to travel back to Dublin or elsewhere for meetings or other events such as seminars or media launches. The venues on such occasions are sometimes beyond the control of the organisation, but where there is flexibility as to where meetings or events take place, care should be taken to ensure that a reasonable proportion of them are held in the host area or at an alternative location within easy access of the host area and Dublin. In pursuing this objective it is important that those public servants who remain in Dublin are encouraged to select venues that take account of the ethos of decentralisation and are not over-reliant on capital locations.

## **4.5.2 Information**

### **Communication Strategy**

***DAD Guideline 12** – A communication strategy, including consideration of how access to host location information can be facilitated, should be formulated, adopted and publicised explaining core functions, arrival dates, etc.*

Central to facilitating maximum local economic benefit will be the conveying of as much information as possible about the goods, services, leisure and cultural facilities, public transport links, etc which exist in and around the host location and that might generate direct expenditure from decentralising staff. Both host location and staff need timely and reliable information about the decentralisation process that can allow them to plan their personal and commercial activity accordingly. Some departments and agencies already have a Communication Strategy in place, and this should be replicated by all decentralising agencies, ensuring that there is a focus within the strategy about communication in respect of the host location.

### **Information Facilitation**

***DAD Guideline 13** – The department should facilitate the provision of information packs or web-based information sites from the local community that convey details of the goods, services, leisure and cultural facilities, public transport links, etc existing in and around the host location.*

One initiative that was put forward during the consultation phase was that departments or agencies should work with the local community, particularly representatives from business, to produce information packs or web-based information sites that will convey details of the goods, services, leisure and cultural facilities, public transport links, etc which exist in and around the host location and that might generate direct expenditure from decentralising staff. Banks were identified as one particular group where it was noted that a good relationship with local branches should be

encouraged at an early stage. There was concern that such a practice might generate a perception that the organisations are favouring particular businesses within a town, but provided the process is based on the flow of locally supplied information via a central, accessible source, this would represent a viable mechanism for allowing staff to access local services if they wish.

## **Use of Intranet**

***DAD Guideline 14 – The organisation should consider establishing a dedicated decentralisation site within their Intranet facility that can allow information about local services to flow from the host location to interested staff.***

One technique being pursued in facilitating the flow of information to staff about the decentralisation process and the host location has involved the establishment of a site on the organisation's Intranet facility dedicated to the subject of decentralisation. This establishes a tailor-made resource that can allow staff to access valuable information about the host location whenever they wish, avoiding the problems generated by continually contacting them directly with additional information in this regard. A dedicated decentralisation e-mail address has also been established in tandem with this initiative in one case, inviting questions related to the entire process. A further idea has been the establishment of a central noticeboard with important information regarding decentralisation. These mechanisms could represent a viable means of informing staff about, and facilitating access to, host location and hinterland services.

## **Exhibitions**

***DAD Guideline 15 – The holding of exhibitions highlighting the key features of host locations and the services and support available, could prove a worthwhile promotional and communication tool.***

A further technique that has been proposed is the holding of an exhibition by the organisation at which a range of local stakeholders from the host location will highlight its key features, with representatives from the housing sector, retailers, leisure industry, local authority, etc. running displays that will convey information about the services and amenities that the community has to offer. Although this would require a proactive local community in order to prove a success, such an initiative could be worthwhile in order to increase goodwill with regard to the host community, and increase confidence that it can provide all the services required by families moving into the area.

### **4.5.3 Staff Relocation Issues**

#### **Demographic Analysis**

***DAD Guideline 16** – Departments and agencies should consider undertaking formal demographic analysis of staff that are willing to relocate, in order that conclusions can be drawn about the profile of such staff and the issues thus arising targeted for action*

There has been anecdotal evidence provided via the consultations with departments and agencies, particularly those that have undertaken decentralisation exercises in the past, that staff who have expressed a wish to decentralise would tend to come from specific circumstances. They note that such staff would often tend to be under 30 years old and would often either be single or part of a couple with no or very young dependent children. However this analysis is based on general perceptions and is a bit ad hoc in nature, and does not serve as an accurate basis to bring forward action. It would be helpful if a formal demographic analysis of staff that are willing to relocate could be undertaken, in order that such conclusions might be able to be drawn on a more rational basis and the issues thus arising targeted for action.

#### **Facilitation of Those Wishing to Relocate in the Short-term**

***DAD Guideline 17** – Departments and agencies should investigate whether any interim measures could be put in place to allow staff to move prior to decentralisation and work from regional offices in proximity to the host location.*

If the suggested demographic analysis confirms the perceptions of representatives of decentralising organisations, it would raise issues with regard to the timeliness of relocation for some staff. It was noted that once children start school, families are more reluctant to uproot and move to another location, a situation that can remain true for a considerable period of time. There is therefore a window of opportunity when people feel they can realistically commit themselves to decentralisation, but if they are involved in a process that might last five to seven years before an actual physical move takes place, then it is perceived that their circumstances will change and staff may no longer be able to commit themselves to the move. Such considerations do not, of course, apply only to young families, as many people may find that a commitment is no longer practical after such a period of time has elapsed.

One way around this problem has been put into place by one decentralising agency, wherein it allows those who express an interest in moving the opportunity to work from their regional office, only 20 miles from the host location, until such time as decentralisation physically takes place. This allows families to move at a time when it is suitable for them to do so, and means that they will be

settled close to the host location at an earlier stage, generating earlier local impacts than would be the case if all staff had to wait until formal decentralisation took place. Although this solution is not practical for all organisations, as some depend on cohesive business units in one site to operate effectively and efficiently, it could be considered by those with regional offices as a means of building up a critical mass of available skilled staff for establishment in the host location when operations begin.

## 5. Guidelines for Local Organisations

### 5.1 Introduction

This section presents guidelines for actions that can be implemented by a combination of the local authority and other local interests in relation to the host location. They are each directed at maximising the local economic impact of the decentralisation process.

Guidelines will relate to:

- profiling key features of their area (which could be done jointly with the decentralising organisation, see Section 4 above) or separately;
- a checklist of possible actions that can be taken locally to maximise positive impact in both the short and longer term.

### 5.2 Area Profile

***LAS Guideline 1*** – *An audit should be undertaken, in tandem with the decentralising organisation, to develop an extensive range of relevant information about the location, and its comparative advantages and gaps in provision of any facilities.*

Throughout the consultation exercise with local authorities and key local stakeholders the introduction of a decentralised government office was generally viewed as having the potential to act as a driver in the future growth of the location, particularly in those smaller towns at which decentralisation is being targeted. It was emphasised that the marginal impact of even 50-60 new jobs in a town of between 2,000 and 5,000 people could have significant multiplier effects as their families (which might increase the population by around 200 in this case) increased expenditure in the town and stimulated further investment.

Key stakeholders within the towns visited as part of the case study exercise shared a degree of optimism about the future potential of their town. The comment was frequently made that the town had comparative advantages that could be exploited, and that it merely needed a major investor to provide the initial financial injection that could stimulate very significant growth, with the boost that decentralisation could provide highlighted. It is therefore essential that if the local socio-economic impact is to be maximised, the comparative advantages of each host location can be identified and

attention can be focused on exploiting such advantages, given an additional influx of residents in the surrounding area.

A broad audit of the various strengths and weaknesses of the host location should therefore be undertaken, focusing on a series of qualitative and quantitative indicators, to identify comparative strengths and weaknesses. Gathering this information should dovetail with the preparation of an audit of the location by the decentralising department or agency, recommended as DAD Guideline 2, with relevant material passed to them to ensure that both tasks can be completed.

This audit could cover a number of different categories, examining demographic and employment trends, the availability of key infrastructure, provision of certain services and amenities, looking at comparative strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in provision. An indicative list of the factors that might be considered in such an audit is provided below:

- |                              |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ▪ Population Size            | ▪ Employment Growth               |
| ▪ Population Trends          | ▪ Education Provision             |
| ▪ Rural Hinterland           | ▪ Tourism Infrastructure          |
| ▪ County Importance          | ▪ Tourist Growth                  |
| ▪ Age of Population          | ▪ Road Infrastructure             |
| ▪ Recent Housing Development | ▪ Rail Infrastructure             |
| ▪ Future Housing Potential   | ▪ Employment Centre               |
| ▪ Average House Prices       | ▪ Retail Centre                   |
| ▪ Infrastructure Investment  | ▪ Service Centre                  |
| ▪ Business Investment        | ▪ Rural Transport Links           |
| ▪ Major Employer(s)          | ▪ Hub/Gateway Proximity           |
| ▪ Sectoral Diversity         | ▪ Airport/Port proximity          |
| ▪ Transport Infrastructure   | ▪ Civic organisations, membership |

***LAS Guideline 2 – Consideration should be given by local representatives of the infrastructure, services and amenities provided by other localities close to the host location, as this may meet gaps in their own provision and encourage retention of expenditure within the wider geographical area.***

Given that there are a number of small towns acting as host locations for the decentralisation process, it is unlikely that they will possess all the necessary infrastructure and assets to entice people to relocate to the town and spend their money there. However, impacts in the surrounding hinterland and other towns nearby are equally valid in successful implementation. By building links within neighbouring communities, a critical mass can be built up that can provide a “package” that

can be marketed to potential and existing inhabitants. This can allow groups of towns to concentrate on individual specialisms that in partnership can cater for all the needs of the decentralised staff.

## 5.3 Actions to Maximise Local Impact – Pre-Relocation

### 5.3.1 Development Issues

*LAS Guideline 3 – The local authority should consider what complementary developments could take place in order to ensure that the impact of the decentralised office on the quality of the local urban environment is maximised.*

Within the “Principles underpinning the Accommodation Acquisition Strategy”, currently being pursued by the Office of Public Works as sites are selected for decentralisation, it was stated that the selection of sites should be consistent with the local development plan in place. This implies a synergy between decentralisation and the wider development of the host area, and this synergy should be fully exploited by local authorities and other stakeholders by tailoring physical improvements in the host area to complement the fact that the construction of the new building. Examples have been gathered during the research process illustrating that some local authorities are bringing forward urban enhancement schemes to complement the development of landmark town centre sites, generating future benefits such as an improved external image of the place, a better shopping environment, increased community spirit and confidence, and possible facilitation of future investment opportunities. All local authorities should investigate whether any activity could take place that would complement the arrival of a new high-quality government office by improving the environment from an urban enhancement perspective. The selection of a town centre site should be seen as only the beginning of an ongoing development process, and as an opportunity that can be exploited by the bringing forward of further activity.

### 5.3.1 Local Organisational Issues

*LAS Guideline 4 – A local liaison group, with a day-to-day contact point, should be established comprising representatives of the local authority, business community and other key local stakeholders.*

A basic first step is appointment of a local contact point for liaison with the incoming public service organisation. This should probably involve:

- a host committee or group (which may be a new dedicated or an existing entity);

- representatives of the key local stakeholders – local authority, business and community (including the location itself, not just the county);
- a single day-to-day person, probably within the local authority (sufficiently senior, but not so senior as to be unavailable when needed).

One finding from the consultations with local authorities and stakeholders was that different host locations had varying levels of community and business participation in the wider development of the location. It was noted that often a few key individuals were usually required to drive forward initiatives that bring local stakeholders and business people together to tackle development issues facing the locality. It may be that, in areas where there is little proactivity in this regard from the private sector, the local authority may have to act as the initial driver of such activity, bring local business representatives on board and building capacity of the private sector in respect to wider economic development.

### **5.3.2 Mechanisms for Conveying Information**

#### **Directory of Local Services**

***LAS Guideline 5** – The preparation of a detailed directory of local services that may be of interest to an incoming organisation would allow decentralising staff to access a base of necessary information with ease.*

Staff considering decentralisation will be considering a number of factors in terms of local services that will facilitate their move and affect their quality of life when they relocate. It would be of enormous benefit to them to be able to access information on a variety of local services, both to obtain an idea of the range of such provision available, and also to investigate the nature of retailing, personal services, public services, leisure and cultural services that are available in the host location. The provision of a brochure with contact details of such organisations, including perhaps accompanying information on the location itself, in an easily referenced format, to all decentralising staff and those considering a move, could generate economic benefits for local services providers.

#### **Host Location Website**

***LAS Guideline 6** – A dedicated website should be prepared to hold all relevant information with regard to the host location that could be easily accessed by decentralising staff or those pondering relocation.*

A number of host local authorities already have sections of their websites dedicated to incoming residents generally. This can provide valuable information about local infrastructure, services and

amenities, and with initiatives such as “virtual tours” allowing people to obtain a “first look” at the locality. Such a website could be linked to the department or agency’s dedicated decentralisation site, if established (see DAD Guideline 14), and perhaps from the central Department of Finance decentralisation website. Those host locations that do not currently have such an outlet, either as part of the local authority or chamber of commerce site, or as a dedicated town site, could consider such a step prior to decentralisation.

### **5.3.3 Support on Specific Relocation Issues**

#### **Housing Availability and Associated Services**

***LAS Guideline 7** – The preparation of a portfolio of available housing in and around the host location, with details of accompanying local support services, would be a worthwhile development in exhibiting the range and relative costs of property in the area.*

Building on this idea, there has been some activity on behalf of the local authorities on helping staff with the actual physical decentralising process. One initiative has been the preparation of a package of potential housing in and around the host location, using information from the myhome.ie website. Although this is a relatively simple task, it has proved to be an impressive asset in allowing people to see the various types of accommodation available in the location, and the relative costs. Such an exercise, perhaps accompanied by additional information provided by local estate agencies, could prove useful in helping to persuade people to move rather than commute from other locations.

The availability and cost of housing in the host location will be an important factor in people’s decision to relocate. Any perception that local house prices are being inflated will also be a potential disincentive. There will therefore be a role for local estate agents to ensure adequate information on availability, and for the local authority – via planning – to help ensure that housing availability is not unnecessarily constrained and is related to decentralisation scheduled.

#### **Employment Opportunities for Relocating Families**

***LAS Guideline 8** – The provision of information on employment opportunities for staff family members in the host location and other commutable destinations, by utilising the expertise of local employment agencies or FÁS, should be considered.*

Decentralisation is a process that involves not only civil servants, but also their families, as they are asked to relocate without guaranteed employment within the host location. There are a number of positive effects that could be realised by facilitating access to local employment opportunities for members of these families, including:

- The likelihood that staff and their families will relocate rather than commute if employment opportunities are available for spouses in the host location;
- The additional value provided by relocating families in terms of the local skills base that will aid existing employers and encourage new investment in the area;
- The increased income generated by securing employment for staff's families that will increase local expenditure and hence economic impact.

Availability of appropriate employment opportunities for public servants' partners and other family members will therefore be an important consideration. Local recruitment agencies and FÁS could be encouraged to have information available about local job opportunities, and to make themselves available to provide individual advice to staff and their families at the appropriate time. Employment opportunities in locations within commutable distance of the host locations should also be taken into consideration as part of this exercise.

### **5.3.4 Local Marketing Initiatives**

#### **Discounts from Local Suppliers**

***LAS Guideline 9** – Introductory discounts for a range of local retail and service outlets, and to access leisure and cultural facilities, would promote a positive image of the host location and help to generate trade in goods and services..*

The guideline below indicates how the private sector can become directly involved in encouraging future socio-economic impact during the planning phase, and there are other activities that can be undertaken in this regard to encourage direct spending on local services. Suggestions have included free introductory memberships at fitness clubs, guest passes for theatres and cinemas, and discounts from local retail outlets. This will introduce the range of services and amenities to any new residents, and encourage repeat access.

#### **Encouraging Local Visits**

***LAS Guideline 10** – The offer of discounted weekend trips to the host location and reduced rates for decentralised staff from local hotels.*

It will be a person's natural instinct to go and have a good look around a place prior to relocating there, or considering such an option. An indication of the evening economy in a place, for example, will only be gained from an overnight stay in this regard. Local hotels therefore can get involved in providing an essential accommodation service for such visits, and in doing so generating a business opportunity for themselves.

## Welcome Events

**LAS Guideline 11** – *The organisation of “welcoming events”, before, during and after arrival, including invitations to existing local events, would help to integrate staff into the community and encourage local expenditure.*

The importance of integrating decentralising staff into the host community has been identified as important by key local stakeholders, and several initiatives were suggested in order to “welcome” them into the community. The holding of welcoming events, before, during and after arrival, invitations to any local events or festivals taking place, and perhaps initiatives arranged in tandem with the departments or agencies such as the host town “exhibition” as suggested in DAD Guideline 15, might represent ways in which direct expenditure impacts can be generated together with the longer-term community development benefits.

One danger identified during the research phase of this study was that, while marketing of services by local stakeholders was understandable, care must be taken to ensure that there was no short-term “profiteering” from the local business community. Of particular concern were rises in house prices due to an influx of people requiring accommodation, and in the costs of other services that may be required by families relocating to a new area. There should be an effort to convey the long-term economic benefits of decentralisation to local businesses and discourage any short-term exploitation of the needs of incoming residents

### 5.3.5 Investment Packages

**LAS Guideline 12** – *The development of investment packages to interest local investors in service opportunities and in investment, e.g. hotels upgrading, housing, could prove to be an effective means to trigger development.*

Encouraging new investment by the private sector would be a key economic impact that could be facilitated by decentralisation. The development of a prime site for the decentralised office could encourage private sector development of adjacent areas, while the improved image of a location that a decentralised government office can bring may also play a part in stimulating interest from potential private sector investors. This is, of course, more likely where the decentralising body is relatively large in the local context.

In order to help stimulate such benefits, it would be advantageous for local organisations, including the local authority or local business group, to proactively develop investment packages that might

interest investors. These could target, for example, the property complexes, housing or additional services that might be required in the area in order to respond to the planned decentralisation.

## **5.4 Actions to Maximise Local Impact – Post-Relocation**

### **5.4.1 Encouraging Local Involvement**

***LAS Guideline 13 – Social involvement in local clubs and initiatives by staff members of the decentralised organisation should be promoted.***

A key requirement in maximising local impact will be that the effort to do so not halt immediately on establishment of the decentralised office, but continue for a period thereafter. Candidate actions are listed here, but will clearly depend in practice on circumstances at the time.

A decentralised organisation will bring a group of high-calibre, experienced people to the location, with a wide range of interests, experience, skills, etc. This can contribute to local social capital through participation in activities, organisations, etc. Evidence from decentralisation exercises in Ireland in the past (see Section 3.6) has suggested that this social impact has been one of the most important benefits that have resulted. If a high level of social interaction with the local community can be obtained with the decentralised staff via promotion of involvement in local clubs and initiatives, further knock-on local social and economic effects might be facilitated.

### **5.4.2 Monitoring Impact**

***LAS Guideline 14 – There should be a framework to ensure systematic monitoring of socio-economic impact post-decentralisation.***

The importance of monitoring local socio-economic impact post-relocation has been emphasised elsewhere in this report (see Sections 4.4.3 and 6.2.2). It is important to track the effect of decentralisation on local socio-economic impact in order that key drivers can be identified and lessons learned for the future. Local bodies, with the co-operation of the decentralised body, could monitor levels of local purchasing, use of local amenities, accessing of public transport etc in order to establish the effectiveness of the host area in encouraging the integration of decentralised staff and the social and economic benefits that might result. Not only will this help the local stakeholders to address any issues that arise from such an exercise, it could also be used as a central resource when any further decentralisation exercises are being planned.

### **5.4.3 Maintaining Contact with Staff**

**LAS Guideline 15** – *There should be a conscious effort to maintain ongoing contact with relocated staff after decentralisation.*

LAS Guideline 13 emphasised how social interaction could be promoted informally by encouraging involvement in local clubs or initiatives. However, some more formal level of interaction may also be helpful. A degree of non-intrusive ongoing contact with the staff of the relocated body could help to identify issues needing to be addressed, encourage commuting staff to relocate, or even encourage people to “spread the word” to colleagues that the host area is a “good place to live”. This could perhaps be achieved by an occasional survey, the use of a local website, or comment boxes in appropriate places.

### **5.4.4 Promoting Local Business Services**

**AS Guideline 16** – *There should be a concerted effort, perhaps via a meeting or ongoing contact between the local Chamber of Commerce and the decentralising organisation, to promote local suppliers in order to encourage direct expenditure.*

When an organisation moves to an area, a variety of local service suppliers may see new business opportunities open up. This must clearly occur only where it makes commercial sense to both the organisation and to the suppliers, and occurs in accordance with public procurement procedures (this issue is further referred to in Section 6.2.1).

A variety of services such as printing, catering, maintenance and IT support may of their nature necessitate local presence and delivery. Hence, both the decentralised organisation and local business representatives could work to ensure full awareness of opportunities and procedures on each side, e.g. awareness of the government e-tenders website by local suppliers<sup>5</sup>. A meeting or workshop type event, where the local Chamber of Commerce and the decentralising organisation discuss local supply needs and how these might be met by the local business community, could be advantageous in this regard.

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<sup>5</sup> [www.e-tenders.gov.ie](http://www.e-tenders.gov.ie)

## 6. Central and Common Issues

### 6.1 Introduction

The primary audiences for these guidelines are decentralising bodies and their host communities. However, in carrying out the research and preparing the guidelines a number of issues emerged which are not specific to either, and which may merit wider consideration at national level. These issues are set out below in Section 6.2. In listing the issues no specific recommendations are being made here. The aim is rather to point out merely that the issues are larger than individual organisations and their host communities, and hence may merit some consideration at national level. Section 6.3 discusses some other common issues around implementation of the Guidelines.

### 6.2 Issues for National Consideration

#### **6.2.1 Public Procurement Procedures and Practices**

A key element of potential local economic impact is that of local purchasing by decentralised organisations. Clearly, however, this possibility must be tempered by the general requirements and practices of procurement in the public sector.

At national level, consideration could therefore be given to exploring the extent to which local purchases are provided for in the procurement guidelines. If this issue requires clarification or the guidelines are perceived to limit the extent to which local purchasing can take place, they could be revisited to investigate whether amendments are possible. Any amendments would of course be under the proviso that local purchasing takes place with the same competitive tendering process as with all other public procurement<sup>6</sup>.

There is also an organisation issue around centralised procurement within individual organisations, and around common procurement by OPW across departments and agencies. Again, whether decentralisation necessitates any re-consideration of existing practices in these areas is an issue that arises, but it is beyond our remit.

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<sup>6</sup> *Public Procurement Guidelines Competitive Process*, National Public Procurement Policy Unit 2004, Department of Finance.

### **6.2.2 Ongoing Monitoring of the Process**

In Chapter 3 we discussed the types of local benefits and impacts that might result from decentralisation, considering research undertaken into the quantification of such impacts elsewhere. It is important that policy makers take advantage of such a major decentralisation exercise in order to more accurately establish how relocation of public offices impacts on local communities in the short, medium and long term.

Ongoing monitoring of the process would be advantageous, with research undertaken to examine the nature, types and quantification of impact and how such impact has been generated. This monitoring should include consultation with the decentralised organisation, the relocated public servants, the local authority, and local businesses.

### **6.2.3 Decentralised Office Locations**

Other things being equal, offices located in town centres are likely to create a much greater visibility and “foot fall” than those located, for example, in remote industrial estates. It is acknowledged that other practical issues, such as site availability and traffic implications, also need to be taken into account. There could also be some trade-off here between the speed at which office sites and premises can be located, and optimum locations from an impact perspective.

In the planning and implementation of the decentralisation process there has been considerable focus on the importance of town centre locations. The Decentralisation Implementation Group and the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Decentralisation have approved a series of “Principles to underpin Accommodation Acquisition Strategy” that support the development of town centre locations for decentralisation purposes alongside other considerations. In this document, a number of factors were identified as relevant influences on the final choice of site, including proximity to public transport and commercial, leisure and educational facilities, and the need to support the realisation of the local authority’s development plan. During the research process evidence was gathered that sites have been selected based on these influences, with prominent town centre locations having been secured. The Office of Public Works gives important consideration to the potential generation of local socio-economic impact, and this commitment should continue as further sites are secured for decentralisation.

### **6.2.4 Public Servant Family Employment Issues**

LAS Guideline 7 acknowledged that securing employment opportunities for family members of relocating public servants is an important issue in helping to generate local socio-economic impact from the decentralisation process. However, it was noted during consultations with departments and

agencies that many spouses of staff in organisations that are due to decentralise work also work within the public sector, meaning that they will either be subject to a decentralisation process themselves, or will be remaining in Dublin for the foreseeable future.

It is acknowledged that the spouse has a right to utilise the CAF scheme in order to secure employment within the host area. However, sometimes such employment may not represent a suitable opportunity given his/her specific skills. Any steps that could be taken centrally to further facilitate the securing of public sector employment for both spouses in the host location or surrounding area, taking account of the specific skills held and type of employment required, should work in the decentralising organisation prove unsuitable, would facilitate relocation and encourage greater local impact.

## **6.3 Other Common Issues**

### ***6.3.1 Equality of Access to Information Flows by Local Businesses***

A series of views were expressed with regard to the appropriateness of intervention to facilitate communication between local stakeholders and staff in organisations. Of paramount importance was the concern that staff did not perceive that they were being pressurised into decentralisation, and that the voluntary nature of the programme is preserved and continues to be emphasised.

As a consequence these Guidelines have concentrated on the facilitation of access to information about host locations, rather than promotion of specific local services and service deliverers, avoiding criticism of activity as uncompetitive in nature in favouring one business over another. We have suggested the use of websites, service directories and information packages that can be accessed by staff as they wish, but which do not directly promote the decentralisation process or particular local businesses.

Care, however, must be taken when putting together such resources that no individual business is given an advantage that another enterprise could not obtain in a similar manner. Therefore entries in service directories, business contacts in information packages, and access to services online should, as far as possible, ensure full coverage of the range of specific service deliverers available in the host location. Furthermore, if proactive approaches by individual service deliverers are made, any platform for sharing information about their services should be available to other businesses in the host location making a similar approach.

### **6.3.2 Timelines for Intervention**

A further issue in ensuring that the guidelines remain relevant and can generate the positive local socio-economic impacts envisaged is that they are utilised at a timely stage of the decentralisation process by individual organisations and, for example, not too far in advance of the actual move. Therefore, while ongoing dialogue between departments and agencies and host communities is to be encouraged from early stages of the process, guidelines relating to the provision of some information to staff will prove more effective in the lead-up to the physical move being undertaken. However, other types of information, relating for example to housing and schools availability, that should be available at an early stage.

Therefore, we propose that there are distinct timelines for intervention to ensure that those types of recommendations relating to access to services relevant post-residence are not implemented until 12-18 months prior to the actual relocation, and that those relating to areas where more advanced planning is necessary (such as the securing of housing or schools places) are implemented at an earlier stage. This will ensure that they remain relevant to the practical needs of staff, and that they maximise economic impact from a local perspective, ensuring that information is timely and will facilitate immediate access of services, rather than being forgotten about due to a time lag in the relocation process. In Section 6.4 we consider the timelines for intervention for each individual action, taking into account the proportionality of action discussed below, and the final prioritisation of individual guidelines.

### **6.3.3 Proportionality of Planning Actions**

One general issue to arise from the guidelines surrounds the scale of decentralisation relative to the series of actions to be considered by the department or agency, local authority or other key local stakeholders. Obviously there are varying numbers of staff relocating in each instance and varying sizes of location that are acting as hosts for this exercise. These factors, taken in tandem with the fact that each guideline if followed would typically involve some cost element in implementation, give rise to a number of considerations that should be taken on board prior to proceeding to follow individual guidelines. The steps that should be undertaken prior to implementation are summarised in Figure 6.1:

**FIGURE 6.1: QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION IN DETERMINING THE VALIDITY OF INDIVIDUAL GUIDELINES TO LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

<b>1</b>	<b>Costs</b> What are the costs of implementing the guideline by the department agency, local authority or local stakeholder?
<b>2</b>	<b>Resources</b> Do the resources exist, either in terms of funding or in the deployment of appropriate human resources, in order to proceed with implementation?
<b>3</b>	<b>Decentralisation Benefits</b> What are the benefits in terms of generating local socio-economic impact from the decentralisation process by implementing this guideline?
<b>4</b>	<b>Other Benefits</b> Does the guideline generate any other benefits for the host location that should be taken into account? E.g. the production of a directory of services could be used to market a town to all potential visitors and encourage trading among local businesses.
<b>5</b>	<b>Scale of Decentralisation</b> Does the scale of decentralisation, in terms of the actual numbers of staff relocating, mean that the scale of local socio-economic impact will be limited to the extent that the costs will outweigh the benefits?
<b>6</b>	<b>Size of the Host Location</b> Does the size of the host location, and hence the retail base, service base, etc., limit the extent to which local socio-economic impact can be realised from the proposed action?
<b>7</b>	<b>Staff Issues</b> Does the guideline generate action that may be viewed in a negative light by staff within the decentralising organisation?
<b>8</b>	<b>Timeline</b> Is the decentralisation process at a stage when the intervention would represent a relevant course of action? E.g. in facilitating access to local services, employment for families, etc.

The answers to these questions will determine whether the proposed actions under each guideline represent a viable means to generate local socio-economic impact. It should therefore act as a final common filter to determine the exact guidelines to be followed in each decentralisation exercise.

## 6.4 Prioritisation of Guidelines

This report has established a number of guidelines for both decentralising departments and agencies and local authorities and other local stakeholders, and highlighted the factors that should determine to what extent they are pursued in individual circumstances. One important issue to consider is at what point in the decentralisation process each guideline should be implemented, and which guidelines represent the most important priorities for action. In the following pages we have separated the individual guidelines into “essential” and “optional” tasks to be undertaken, and identified broadly when such tasks should be undertaken across the following distinct time periods:

- Prior to site selection;
- Post site selection but relocating staff not known;
- Immediate lead-up to move when staff that are relocating are known;
- Immediate aftermath of relocation;
- Ongoing activity post-relocation.

**FIGURE 6.2: PRIORITISATION OF GUIDELINES AND ATTACHED TIMELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

	● Essential that guideline is implemented	○ Implementation of the guideline is optional			
Guideline	Prior to Site Selection	Post Site Selection	Immediate Prior to Relocation	Immediate Post-Relocation	Ongoing Post-Relocation
<b>DAD Guidelines</b>					
1 – A short audit of the decentralising organisation should be undertaken in order to ensure that management understand the areas in which they could generate positive local socio-economic benefits and hence plan activity accordingly.	●				
2 – Working with local stakeholders, an audit of the host location, investigating the availability of key infrastructure, services and amenities in the place and its surrounding area, should be undertaken in order to ensure that any gaps in this regard can be identified and solutions found.	●				
3 – The site selection process should take account of the fact that a prominent town centre (or near centre) location for the decentralised operations would generate significant local socio-economic benefits.	●				
4 – When considering the nature of the premises to be established under decentralisation, consideration should continue to be given to potential urban renewal benefits from developing a high profile, modern focal point within the host location.		●			
5 – There should be early interaction between the destination host community and its representatives in the planning of the move, and regular contact throughout the planning phase.		●			
6 – A risk analysis should be undertaken of what could go wrong in relation to local community relations and steps should be taken to address any local concerns.		○			
7 – A consultation exercise should be held with prospective and actual decentralising staff regarding their needs, motivations and expectations of the host area.		●			
8 – Discussions with local education and training providers might be considered in order to establish whether any relevant training is currently being offered or whether there is potential for appropriate education and training opportunities to be provided in the future.			○		
9 – An examination of service requirements should be undertaken giving consideration to what could be purchased locally (with public			●		

**SECURING MAXIMUM POSITIVE BENEFIT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE DECENTRALISATION PROGRAMME**

procurement guidelines).	Prior to Site Selection	Post Site Selection	Immediate Prior to Relocation	Immediate Post-Relocation	Ongoing Post-Relocation
<b>Guideline</b>					
10 – If the organisation conducts direct transactions via their office-based locations, consideration should be given to how clients and customers located within proximity of the new location can be encouraged to take advantage of such services.			○		
11 - Where there is flexibility as to where meetings or events are to take place, care should be taken to ensure that a reasonable proportion of them are held in the host area or at an alternative location within easy access of the host area and Dublin.				●	●
12 – A communication strategy, including consideration of how access to host location information can be facilitated, should be formulated, adopted and publicised explaining core functions, arrival dates, etc.		●			
13 – The department should facilitate the provision of information packs or web-based information sites from the local community that convey details of the goods, services, leisure and cultural facilities, public transport links, etc existing in and around the host location.		○	○	○	○
14 – The department should consider establishing a dedicated decentralisation site within their Intranet facility that can allow information about local services to flow from the host location to interested staff.		○			
15 – The holding of exhibitions highlighting the key features of host locations and the services and support available could prove a worthwhile promotional and communication tool.			○		
16 – Departments and agencies should consider undertaking formal demographic analysis of staff that are willing to relocate, in order that conclusions can be drawn about the nature of such staff, and the issues thus arising targeted for action.		○			
17 – Departments and agencies should investigate whether any interim measures could be put in place to allow staff to move prior to decentralisation and work from regional offices in proximity to the host location.		○			
<b>LAS Guidelines</b>					
1 – An audit should be undertaken, in tandem with the decentralising organisation, to establish an extensive range of relevant information about the location, and its comparative advantages and gaps in provision of any facilities.	●				
2 – Consideration should be given by local representatives of the infrastructure, services and amenities provided by other localities close to the host location, as this may meet gaps in their own provision and encourage retention of expenditure within the wider geographical area.	●				
3 – The local authority should consider that complementary developments could take place in order to ensure that the impact of the decentralised office on the quality of the local urban environment is maximised.		●			

**SECURING MAXIMUM POSITIVE BENEFIT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE DECENTRALISATION PROGRAMME**

4 – A local liaison group, with a day-to-day contact point, should be established comprising representatives of the local authority, business community and other key local stakeholders.					
<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Prior to Site Selection</b>	<b>Post Site Selection</b>	<b>Immediate Prior to Relocation</b>	<b>Immediate Post-Relocation</b>	<b>Ongoing Post-Relocation</b>
5 – The preparation of a detailed directory of local services that may be of interest to an incoming organisation would allow decentralising staff to access a base of necessary information with ease.					
6 – A dedicated website should be prepared to hold all relevant information with regard to the host location that could be easily accessed by decentralising staff or those pondering relocation.					
7 – The preparation of a portfolio of available housing in and around the host location, with details of accompanying local support services, would be a worthwhile development in exhibiting the range and relative costs of property in the area.					
8 – The provision of information on employment opportunities for staff family members in the host location and other commutable destinations, by utilising the expertise of local employment agencies or FÁS, should be considered.					
9 – The preparation of a voucher system offering discounts for a range of local retail and service outlets, and to access leisure and cultural facilities, would promote a positive image of the host location and help to generate trade in goods and services.					
10 – The offer of discounted weekend trips to the host location and reduced rates for decentralised staff from local hotels.					
11 – The organisation of “welcoming events”, before, during and after arrival, including invitations to existing local events, would help to integrate staff into the community and encourage local expenditure.					
12 – The development of investment packages to interest local investors in service opportunities and in investment, e.g. hotels upgrading, housing, could prove to be an effective means to trigger development.					
13 – Social involvement in local clubs and initiatives by staff members of the decentralised organisation should be promoted.					
14 – There should be a framework put in place to ensure systematic monitoring of socio-economic impact post-decentralisation.					
15 – There should be a conscious effort to maintain ongoing contact with re-located staff after decentralisation.					
16 – There should be a concerted effort to promote local suppliers to the decentralised body in order to encourage direct expenditure.					



Johnstown

Annexes

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# Annex 1: Consultees

1. Boland, Margaret - Birr Town Council
2. Brennan, Louis – Laois County Council
3. Clarke, Dorothy – Sligo County Council
4. Collins, Eadoin – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
5. Condon, Martin – Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
6. Curran, Siobhan -Clare County Council
7. Cusack, Carthage - Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
8. Doody, John – Listowel Town Council
9. Duffy, Joyce – Department of Education and Science
10. Egan, Oliver - FÁS
11. Fennelly, Michael – Office of Public Works
12. Foley, Des – Drogheda Borough Council
13. Ganley, Jim – Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
14. Glynn, Charles - Kilrush Chamber of Commerce
15. Griffin, Michael – Limerick County Council
16. Hennessy, Catriona – Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
17. Hepburn, Caroline – Marine Institute
18. Hunt, Seamus - Newcastlewest Community Council
19. King, Adge – Monaghan County Council
20. Ledwidge, Pat – Cork City Council
21. Malloy, Paul – Office of Public Works
22. McCarthy, Mary – Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
23. McCormack, Richard – BIM
24. McGrath, Alison – Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce and Industry
25. Moran, Joyce - Revenue Commissioners
26. Moran, Ogie – Shannon Development – Area Manager for Kerry
27. Murphy, Sean – Chambers of Commerce Ireland
28. Murray, Ray – BIM
29. O'Domhnaill, Tomas - Shannon Development
30. O' Malley, Monica - Longford Community Resources
31. O' Rourke, Graham - Drogheda Borough Chamber of Commerce
32. O'Brien, Bernie – Carlow County Council
33. O'Halloran, Martin – Health and Safety Authority
34. Page Des - Kildare County Council
35. Quinlivan, John – Shannon Development – Area Manager for Clare
36. Roch, Michael - Offaly County Council

37. Rusk, Karl - Longford Chamber of Commerce
38. Sheridan, Frank – Longford County Council
39. Sheridan, Frank -County Development Board
40. Treanor, Colm - Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
41. Tynan, Anne - Department of Social and Family Affairs
42. Walsh, Tony – Kilkenny County Council
43. Wyse, Frank – Department of Education and Science

## Annex 2: Documentation Reviewed

- 1 Report of the Decentralisation Implementation Group, Decentralisation Implementation Group, 31 March 2004.
- 2 Second Report of Decentralisation Implementation Group, Decentralisation Implementation Group, July 2004.
- 3 Report to Minister of Finance – Selection of Organisations/Locations for Inclusion in the First Phase of Moves, November 2004.
- 4 Decentralisation – Principles to Underpin Accommodation Acquisition Strategy, 2004.
- 5 Report to Minister for Finance – Decentralised Office Accommodation Procurement Methodology and Financial Assessment, November 2004.
- 6 Central Applications Facility – How the Scheme Works, News Updates, Useful Tips, Useful Contacts, Publicjobs.ie, 2004.
- 7 Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Decentralisation Implementation Plan, May 2004.
- 8 Health and Safety Authority Implementation Plan for Decentralisation, May 2004.
- 9 BIM Decentralisation Implementation Plan, Submission to the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, June 2004.
- 10 Department of Education and Science Decentralisation Implementation Plan, June 2004.
- 11 Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Decentralisation Implementation Plan, May 2004.
- 12 Initial Decentralisation Implementation Plan, Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, June 2004.
- 13 Initial Implementation Plan for Decentralisation of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to Knock Airport, Co. Mayo and Na Forbacha, Co. Galway, May 2004.
- 14 Office of the Revenue Commissioners Outline Decentralisation Implementation Plan, June 2004.
- 15 FÁS Head Office Decentralisation Implementation Plan, June 2004.
- 16 Decentralisation – Information on Towns in the West, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, 2004.
- 17 Department of Social and Family Affairs Decentralisation Implementation Plan, 2004
- 18 Decentralisation: the Civil Service Experience. Laraine Joyce, Peter C. Humphreys, Ann Kelleher. Institute of Public Administration, 1988.
- 19 E-Government and the Decentralisation of Service Delivery CPMR Discussion Paper. Virpi Timonen, Orla O'Donnell, Peter C. Humphreys, Institute of Public Administration, 2003.
- 20 The Impact of Relocation, A Report for the Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation, Experian, January 2004.

- 21 Well Placed to Deliver? Shaping the Pattern of Government Service – Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation. Sir Michael Lyons, March 2004
- 22 Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation, Evidence Submitted by Birmingham City Council, Birmingham City Council 2003
- 23 Key Towns Study, Fitzpatrick Associates, study for Shannon Development, March 2004.
- 24 An Appraisal of the Irish Government's Current Decentralisation Programme, Ciara O'Dwyer, September 2004.
- 25 Geographical Mobility: Family Impacts, Green, A. and Canny, A. 2003.
- 26 Comparative Assessment of Locations Prepared for Sir Michael Lyons' Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation: Final Report, King Sturge 2003.
- 27 Regulatory agencies to be moved out of Oslo, Lismoen, H. 2003.
- 28 Submission by the Irish Government to Finance Committee Reporters Investigation into Executive Prelocation Policy, Scottish Parliament Finance Committee. 2004.
- 29 "Public Service Relocation Programme: Optimising the Opportunity Keynote address to Annual Delegate Conference", Walsh, E. 2004.

## Annex 3: Interview Pro Formas

### INTERVIEW PRO FORMA FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

1. How far along are they in terms of the decentralisation process, i.e. site acquisition, construction, etc. Any local involvement in this regard? Any updated view to when you would expect to realistically see department/agency begin operations?
2. Can they identify any actions that could be progressed either by the decentralising department or agency in order to maximise the impact of the decentralisation process?
  - a. Would local purchasing be feasible, e.g. IT, Office Supplies, printing services, catering etc. ?
  - b. Are staff visits/presentations about host location a good idea?
  - c. Do they have any other ideas?
3. Can they identify any actions that could take place at local level that would help the decentralising organisation and its staff in undertaking the decentralisation process?
  - a. Are there any outputs from the staff consultation exercise in terms of what can make the process easier for staff and in turn generate local impact?
  - b. Is a greater level of local information required, e.g. Property services, IT, catering, childcare, etc.?
  - c. Is specific help from the local authority required? Help from council – site acquisition?
4. Can they identify any specific obstacles in the way of the decentralisation project maximising its local beneficial impact?
  - a. Is there a lack of information available about local services?
  - b. Will larger settlements nearby soak up the benefits?
  - c. Is there a danger that most people will commute rather than relocate?
  - d. Are there barriers limiting the extent to which local purchasing can take place?
5. Is any consideration being given by the decentralising organisation in its planning to the issue of its potential local impact?
  - a. Is there any evidence in implementation plan?
  - b. Is it something that will be given more attention in the immediate lead-up to the actual physical relocation?
6. Have any local organisations, e.g. local authority, Chamber of Commerce, etc. made approaches with regard to how local beneficial impact might be maximised or possible

downsides minimised?

7. Are any local organisational structures or arrangements in place or are planned in order to handle this aspect of the whole move, e.g. a local liaison committee, planning support, etc?
8. Are there any issues that they feel should be addressed at a central level by the Department of Finance or Decentralisation Implementation Group that would assist in the generation of local socio-economic impact?
9. Testing ideas for guidelines. Gather their views on whether suggested guidelines suggested during earlier consultations are appropriate.

**INTERVIEW PRO FORMA FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH  
LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS**

1. To what extent do you think that local socio-economic impact in your host location will be achievable from the decentralisation process?
2. What are the key strengths and drivers of growth in your host location in terms of infrastructure, accessibility, retailing, business, housing that could be tapped into to maximise the impact of the decentralisation process?
3. Can you identify any actions that you think could be progressed by the decentralising department or agency in order to maximise the local socio-economic impact of the decentralisation process?
4. Can you identify any actions that you think could be progressed by the local authority or local stakeholders in order to maximise the local socio-economic impact of the decentralisation process?
5. Do you see any specific obstacles in the way of maximising the local beneficial impact of decentralisation?
6. Have any local organisations, e.g. local authority, Chamber of Commerce, etc. made approaches with regard to how local beneficial impact might be maximised or possible downsides minimised?
7. Are any local organisational structures or arrangements in place or planned in order to handle the host location's response to the decentralisation process, e.g. a local liaison committee, etc.?
8. Testing ideas for guidelines. Gather their views on whether guidelines suggested during earlier consultations are appropriate.