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South Cambridgeshire
District Council

10 January 2021

To: Chair – Councillor Henry Batchelor
Vice-Chair – Councillor Dawn Percival
Members of the Employment and Staffing Committee – Councillors Dr. Claire Daunton, Sally Ann Hart, Mark Howell, Heather Williams and John Williams

Quorum: 3

Substitutes: Councillors Sue Ellington, Graham Cone, Nick Wright, Bunty Waters, Grenville Chamberlain, Jose Hales and Peter McDonald

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Employment and Staffing Committee**, which will be held in **Council Chamber - South Cambs Hall** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **Friday, 14 January 2022** at **10.00 a.m.**

Members are respectfully reminded that when substituting on committees, subcommittees, and outside or joint bodies, Democratic Services must be advised of the substitution ***in advance of*** the meeting. It is not possible to accept a substitute once the meeting has started. Council Standing Order 4.3 refers.

Yours faithfully
Liz Watts
Chief Executive

Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Agenda

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5.	**Hybrid Working Policy** Report to follow	**1 - 22**

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Agenda Item 5

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Report to:	Employment and Staffing Committee 14th January 2022
Lead Cabinet Member:	John Williams
Lead Officer:	Jeff Membery

New Hybrid Working Policy

Executive Summary

1. The majority of the Council's office-based staff have been working primarily from home since March 2020, when the UK first went into lockdown. While this caused some initial difficulties, all departments have now put measures in place to allow the continued delivery of services to our residents while operating a remote workforce. There is a clear need and desire for a continued hybrid working approach in the long term, and the proposed policy outlines how this would work at South Cambridgeshire district Council.

Key Decision

2. No

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the committee review the proposed new policy, provide feedback, and refer to Cabinet for their approval.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The introduction of a hybrid working policy will allow us to continue to meet our residents needs while also accommodating the needs and wellbeing of our employees, and the increased flexibility that the modern workforce expects. This should also impact on our recruitment and staff retention, as it demonstrates we are a modern and caring council.

Details

5. Since March 2020, the majority of Council staff have been working primarily from home, with occasional visits or meetings in our offices. While this doesn't currently apply to all of our operational staff in the Shared Waste Service, we have had very positive feedback from colleagues in other service areas and local residents, with particular positivity about the benefits of hybrid working on flexibility and the wellbeing of our colleagues.

6. The move to home-working did result in some rapid changes in many service areas, especially regarding ICT and telephone systems, but measures have now been put in place that allow colleagues to continue delivering excellent customer services from any location. This includes all teams completing a Team Charter, which outlines how teams will be working in a hybrid manner, and how they will continue to meet their service obligations.

7. A survey of SCDC colleagues conducted in March 2020 found that over 70% of respondents would like to continue working from home regularly in the long-term, and several more recent survey's, including a report by ONS in June 2021, suggest that there is a strong desire for hybrid working across all office-based sectors. This means that in addition to our current work force, potential future employees will also be expecting more flexible work offerings in the future so the Council must adapt to this change if they wish to be competitive and appeal to good candidates.

8. We are therefore proposing the introduction of a Hybrid Working policy, which will outline the Council's approach to hybrid working and how it can be applied to individuals. While this will include the option for remote working, it does not mean that employees will have to work remotely if they would prefer to be based entirely in the office. There are also some roles which, due to the nature of the role, will not be suitable for hybrid working (e.g. a refuse loader).

9. Our suggested approach is for employees to identify which working profile they fit into, these being

    a. Fixed profile
    b. Hybrid – on the go
    c. Hybrid – desk based

10. Teams will then be empowered to use their Team Charter's and individual conversations between employees and their managers to determine what working patterns would best accommodate the employees' wants and the services needs, and these will be continually reviewed to ensure appropriate support and cover is provided. This approach will allow for individual needs to be taken into account, such as childcare arrangements, disabilities, or home workstation set-up.

11. The proposed policy has been aligned with other HR policies and practices, and consideration paid to our Health and Safety and ICT/data requirements. In particular, we have considered the impact the policy may have on our staff engagement levels, and the health and wellbeing of our employees, and are hopeful that the continuation of flexible and hybrid working options may be of particular benefit to colleagues with physical or mental conditions. For example, those who benefit from being able to take regular breaks away from their screen, or who find the traditional office-based work environment causes them anxiety or distracts them from their tasks. We are aware that the change to remote working has been difficult for some, and are intending to continue our programme of webinars and training around remote working and managing stress.

12. Of final note, in the writing of the policy we have included an 'abbreviations and definitions' section, however would appreciate any feedback from members about any terms they feel should be defined or explained here.

Options

13. The options open to the committee are to review the proposed new policy, and provide feedback to Cabinet.

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Legal

15. The proposed policy has been written in accordance with all legal requirements and best practice.

Staffing

16. By increasing our flexible working offering to staff, our aim is to better support our colleagues and their work-life balance while continue to meet our residents needs. Hybrid working is predicted to be a priority for future job-seekers, and our current work-force are strongly in favour of maintaining some hybrid working arrangements in the long-term.

Equality and Diversity

17. The EqIA for the new policy will be completed in advance of the Cabinet meeting and form part of the approval process. By increasing the flexible approach to working we are better supporting colleagues who may have struggled with some aspects of fully officed based work, such as travel or distractions that an office environment may present. Care has been taken to cover the Health and Safety aspects of hybrid-working, and the Council's commitment to providing safe and healthy working environments for all, including the provision of specialist equipment when needed.

18. Hybrid working also allows us to better support those colleagues who may have previously struggled to access work due to other ongoing commitments such as caring responsibilities, as it empowers them to make more decisions around their working schedules within the agreed upon frameworks.

Climate Change

19. By encouraging hybrid working, we are allowing staff to reduce their carbon footprint by reducing the amount of travel they must do to and from the office. We are also allowing residents to complete tasks virtually, which reduces the amount of travel they must do to our offices as well.

Health & Wellbeing

20. The new policy should help our colleagues maintain a healthy work-life balance, to the benefit of their health and wellbeing.

Consultation responses

21. Consultation with unions has not been completed yet, but will be required before the policy can be introduced.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

22. By increasing our flexibility we are demonstrating a commitment to modern ways of working and providing our employees with a safe and nurturing working environment.

Appendices

Appendix A: Hybrid Working Policy
Appendix B: FAQs

Report Author:

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Hybrid Working Policy

Document Control	
Date of Last version	2022
Latest review	
Name of Reviewer	Chloe Whitehead
Consultation	
Approved by	

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Abbreviations and definitions

The table below contains explanations for the abbreviations and definitions used in this policy. If you have any questions about any of these please contact the HR team for clarification.

Abbreviation or word	Meaning
DSE	Display Screen Equipment (e.g. laptop screen, computer monitor, tablet screen, phone, etc.)
Hybrid working	A working arrangement where colleagues have more than one regular location of work (e.g. office, home-working, hub, district council office, etc.)
Agile working	Bringing people, processes, connectivity and technology, time and place together to find the most appropriate and effective way of working
Reasonable Adjustments	Changes to a colleagues' work/role that remove or reduce a disadvantage. This could be an adjustment to working pattens, or an alteration to the way tasks are completed.

1. Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to providing a flexible, adaptive, and agile working environment for its employees. This includes the way we work, where we work, and what tools we need to utilise to support our hybrid approach.

Our "*hybrid*" approach means that work is an activity we do rather than a place we go; "work is what you do – not where you do it". It places an emphasis on an activity-based culture, using new tools, new processes, increased flexible working opportunities and new approaches to management and teamwork. It is underpinned by our behaviours; working together, authenticity, dynamic and innovative, and supports a culture of looking at outcomes as the measure of success.

This policy is part of a suite of documents to implement hybrid ways of working. Please refer to the FAQs in Appendix 1 for further information.

Aim of the procedure

The aim of this procedure is to ensure that the Council treats all staff fairly and consistently. It outlines the framework in which we expect employees to agree and develop their own forms of hybrid working, and provides support for managers in making these agreements with their teams and wider colleagues.

Access to this Policy

As part of this policy, the Council will make reasonable adjustments for employees to support their hybrid working, and ensure a safe working environment for all.

Employees who need assistance with interpreting this policy should contact the HR team for guidance and support.

2. Hybrid Principles

We recognise that developing our hybrid culture and ensuring that the changes become embedded is a collective responsibility. The principles and commitments below play a key part of embedding our new way of working.

At SCDC we work flexibly by:

- accepting that flexibility is the norm rather than the exception,
- reviewing each role to agree how it can best be delivered, based on the activities required to meet customers' needs and support delivery of agreed outcomes,
- ensuring work takes place at the most effective location and time, relevant to the outcome, customer, individual and team needs.
- delivering tools and space which enable collaboration, connectivity and opportunities for hybrid ways of working together,
- continuously challenging traditional and new approaches to how we deliver our services to make sure they are fit for purpose and continually improving,
- ensuring consistency of approach in how we manage flexible working, using pragmatism to accept that specifics may differ for each team, role, and person,
- respecting and supporting individual circumstances, concerns, and the changing needs of our colleagues, providing wellbeing support and development as required,
- managing employees by performance and outcomes rather than presenteeism,
- providing fit for purpose digital and virtual tools to enable the best delivery of services and interactions, automating processes, and eliminating need for paper,
- focussing and delivering benefits related to working flexibly e.g., reduced carbon emissions and accommodation costs.

As an Organisation We Will…

- Provide training, equipment, and the tools required to fulfil your role effectively and efficiently,
- Support our managers to:
  - ensure safe and effective working practices can be easily understood and adhered to by you,
  - take accountability for their team's progress and commitment to workplace culture,

  - manage individual requirements, including specifics such as reasonable adjustments and the needs of newly appointed colleagues,
  - undertake regular performance development conversations and be available to provide necessary support,
- Ensure information about the Council, your employment and specifics related to your role are kept up to date and easily accessible via a colleagues' intranet,
- Provide as much notice and detail as possible about activities and duties which need to be completed at a specific location and time,
- Enable face to face collaboration to be completed in any suitable space appropriate to the confidentiality of the discussion,

As Colleagues We Will…

- Maintain positive communication and engagement within and across teams, including delivering virtual meetings and interactions in an appropriate manner,
- Ensure a working environment which is conducive to delivering our very best, meeting health & safety and working time directive requirements,
- Respect and support individual circumstances, participating in team activities, sharing learnings and best practice with colleagues,
- Manage our time to ensure delivery of agreed outcomes, sharing any challenges or concerns so a solution can be found,
- Work with our teams to ensure cover for our customers and colleagues, ensuring calendars and communication tools are effectively used,
- Agree as a team when we will have collaborative time and actively participate in this,
- Comply with ICT security and data protection requirements, taking care of all equipment provided.

3. Hybrid Approach

In many cases, colleagues will blend different flexible working options, according to the activities required. This involves a substantial move away from the idea that an individual applies for and is granted a single work pattern that is set in stone. It is important to take a team approach so that flexible working arrangements can be planned to cover the service needs as well as promote more flexible working arrangements for colleagues. Please refer to your Team Charter for your team's agreement to how they will work together.

To consider the flexible and hybrid working arrangements which would be suitable for a specific role or team, we will first analyse the activities involved in each job role, considering how effectively they can be done at different times and in different locations. We will then consider the impact on teamwork and/ or customer service to agree the worker profile for each role.

The worker profile will be the same for every role in a team and enables the colleague and their manager to be clear about how much flexibility there is to deliver a role. This is then overlaid with the individual personal preference. The table below captures our two forms of worker profile: Hybrid and Fixed. Most of our roles are classified as hybrid,

which is then further broken down into the requirements of the hybrid role. In addition, a set of standard equipment for each role will be agreed.

Worker profile descriptions

Hybrid	Fixed
A role which in the main can be conducted from various locations. Although they may have some pre-determined hours/location requirements Individuals in the team have the autonomy to determine their working hours and/or location within pre-agreed team requirements to ensure the agile working profile requirements are met.	A role which in the main has to be completed during set hours and/or location. Flexibility is very limited and only on a pre-agreed basis with the team manager. Individuals in the team can work together with their manager to consider how the role can be delivered in a more agile way, but due to the agile working profile requirement, individuals are not able to have the autonomy to determine their working hours and/or location.

Hybrid is then further divided, as outlined below.

Hybrid: on-the-go	Hybrid: desk based
• A role which starts and finishes their day from a base but during the day moves between locations and places. • Typically, this role needs the flexibility to schedule diaries so they can meet customers/partners and have meetings with teams or their manager in any location. • It is vital they can access files and folders from wherever they are working. • They may work from partners' buildings or in public spaces. • They will come back to the office from time to time across the week.	• A role which can be completed without specific desk set up requirements. • Typically, this role needs a desk, screen and ICT access to folders and systems. • They don't need a particular location but tend to stay in one location all day. • Their role is mainly desk based. • They may occasionally work from partners' buildings or in public spaces. *NB: Some roles in this category will require a set desk due to specific requirements which can only be set up on a certain desk. This will be agreed where relevant.*

Delivering this approach to ways of working means:

- Our focus is on delivering agreed outcomes and activities, as opposed to the number of hours worked. We will still have a total contracted number of hours, with an agreed work pattern (this is required for our HR/payroll system), however where and how these are worked will vary from person to person.
- Core business hours may differ between services, based on customer and activity needs. The support required to deliver these services needs to be considered and agreed.

- The use of both virtual and digital working is critical, however we accept that there is sometimes great benefit in being face to face, such as when inducting new people or supporting less experienced colleagues to develop their knowledge/skills.
- We want to see an increase in mixed working groups, cutting across teams and services, including the use of greater matrix management.
- It is important to take a team approach so that working arrangements can be planned to cover our customers' needs as well as promote more flexible working arrangements for colleagues,
- We recognise that for some colleagues the option for flexible working is greatly reduced or not available, due to the nature of their role, as they are required to deliver a service from a specific location or at a specific time. In these cases, local options will be discussed and agreed to allow as much flexibility as possible for all colleagues.
- We do not believe in the future there will be a requirement for a formal flexi time scheme, however we understand for many colleagues this scheme is a helpful way to record and manage their hours and there would need to be time allowed for consultation, transition and the trust to be built up between managers and colleagues that time can be managed without the need for the formal scheme. So our longer term goal is to move away from a bureaucratic system of logging hours to a system based on trust and delivery of agreed outputs.
- All our colleagues, where their role allows, are empowered to manage their hours of work to ensure customer needs and partner requirements are met and our agreed outcomes delivered.
- Health and Wellbeing of all colleagues remains important and a process for raising concerns or challenges, related to new ways of working will need to be put in place

4. Workspace

Within our offices, accommodation will be set up with:

- Spaces for collaboration equipped with appropriate technology to connect virtually with remote colleagues/ customers and partners,
- Touch-down spaces for people working on the move,
- Special project areas.

A key constraint on the introduction of flexible working is a perceived dependency on paper documents, storage, and other physical resources. While there are some statutory obligations to retain paper documents, the reasons for using and generating paper are becoming less and less compelling in an age of electronic based working.

The use of electronic processes and appropriate on-line storage and filing is essential to flexible working, enabling more effective working from any location. Managers and colleagues should feel empowered to continuously challenge traditional and new approaches to work, making sure they are fit for purpose but do not suppress our hybrid and flexible ways of working practices.

Working remotely

Most of our hybrid workers can work from a selection of different locations outside of the office. We have three different forms of remote working available to our colleagues, captured below:

Home - When colleagues are working from home, it is important that the home working environment is set up properly, your home must:

- provide you with a space which is free from interruptions and distractions, including distractions from caring responsibilities (please see FAQs for more details),
- comply with the needs of the home workplace assessment,
- not be used as a work location for face to face (in person) meetings with members of the public,
- enable you to always keep all documents and information associated with council's business secure,
- have adequate insurance cover to enable you to work from home, the Council will not fund any additional premiums, *(refer FAQs for more information on this)*
- have no restrictions which would stop you working from home e.g., specific clauses in a mortgage or rental agreement.

Hub - work may be able to be carried out in 'third party places', for example: client offices, organisational partners, shared offices, cafés, hotel lobbies, libraries and on public transport. Colleagues accessing the network via such external WiFi hotspots signals should always use the correct security procedures and be mindful of information security and confidentiality when working from alternative locations.

Roam - For some of our colleagues work is completed either on the move or from various sites. The main issues with working on the move relate to confidentiality, security, safety and health. Safety concerns relate both to personal security and security of organisational property and data.

All colleagues should follow the Lone Worker Policy and whatever your work style, you should never give out your home address, or personal phone number to those outside your immediate team.

5. Team Management

When working in different locations and at different times, social relationships need to be maintained and appropriate online and offline mechanisms need to be developed, such as buddy schemes for new recruits, regular team meetings, colleague briefings etc.

It is the responsibility of teams to look out for each other, and for managers of dispersed teams to spot problems and resolve them before they become major issues. These may be teased out through regular conversations, or clues may be spotted in terms of performance. If necessary, the manager and team member can agree an alternative work style. It is about finding the right work style for the individual, and about providing the appropriate support to overcome the problem.

The aim in moving to our new ways of working is to create the context in which teams can operate more dynamically and have better physical and online spaces in which to interact. Though they may no longer sit next to one another, the new technologies should allow much more effective sharing of work and enable team members to communicate more effectively than before. New ways of working will also support more effective cross-team working amongst services.

It is important to have clear expectations about what is to be done and about communications within the team. A team should ensure there is/are:

- clear reporting structures,
- clear methods of regular communication, such as Teams updates or team meetings,
- sharing of calendars and schedules,
- rigorous use of electronic document management systems, to ensure work is easily accessible,
- a balanced approach to allocating work and working times, such that no individual is disadvantaged by the choices of others, e.g., in providing office cover or attending meetings,
- useful online communications, and etiquette in virtual meetings is followed,
- signposting and availability for phone contact or online discussion,
- fairness in use of space when in the office.

6. Data Security and Information Management

Maintaining the security of the information we work with is vital and those working remotely are responsible for the security of the data they keep and should comply with all relevant legislation and organisational policies, just as if they were working in a fixed council office.

Specifically:

- Confidential or sensitive conversations/work should not be carried out whilst in any public areas,
- Other individuals (including family members) should not have any access to personal data either on paper or as electronic records,
- All printed or other paper records must be safely locked away when not in use,
- Confidential waste should be disposed of securely,
- All council data stored outside of the council’s network, must only be stored on council systems and/or encrypted council owned devices. Council data must not be stored on any personal devices and/or colleagues should not send work related emails to their personal email address,
- If colleagues are using a laptop or other portable device, they must be aware of the additional security risks if leaving this device unattended,
- If colleagues become aware of any loss of council data they must contact the Information Governance team and notify their line manager immediately.

It is the responsibility of all colleagues to ensure that information is handled correctly and not used for personal benefit or gain. Failure to follow the above regulations may result in disciplinary action.

Personal usage of equipment and technology

Please refer to our IT policy for more information

7. Health and Safety when Working Hybrid

The Council has a duty of care for all employees, whether they are working in the office, at home, on the move, or in some other working environment.

Employees also need to be responsible for ensuring their workstation is fit for purpose and that they follow the health & safety tips and guidelines provided. Further information can be found on the health and safety pages on Insite.

It is a requirement that all colleagues complete the Workplace DSE workstation assessment for their usual working locations; this means for both home and office. The DSE assessment can be accessed by contacting our Health and Safety officer.

If you are working remotely then your comfort and safety is just as important as it is when working in an office. Using laptops for prolonged periods in an office or home office environment may require the use of a laptop stand and/or an additional properly positioned screen, with a separate keyboard and mouse.
There are also some simple steps you can take to increase your physical wellbeing whilst working from home or remotely:

- breaking up long spells of DSE work with rest breaks (at least 5 minutes every hour) or changes in activity,
- avoiding awkward, static postures by regularly changing position,
- getting up and moving or doing stretching exercises,
- avoiding eye fatigue by for example changing focus,
- wiping down hard surfaces at the end and start of every working day,
- ensuing adequate lighting within your working environment to avoid eye strain.

8. Working Hours

One of the benefits of working more flexibly is that it can help create a positive work-life balance. For example, it can ease the daily commute and/or help colleagues manage family, caring or domestic responsibilities during lunch breaks or directly before and after they work. Colleagues should ensure that whilst working from home they do not work excessively long or low hours on a regular basis and should only work their contracted hours. More information can be found on the gov.uk website:

https://www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours.

Please also refer to the FAQ about working extra hours.

Alongside other initiatives to promote a healthy workplace, flexible working practices can reduce absence and, in particular, reduce stress. A significant proportion of absence from work is due to minor ailments that make the thought of commuting and sitting in an office with colleagues not feasible but manageable if working from home – being able to work from home on these occasions can have a significant impact on 'sick leave'. In these instances, colleagues should speak with their line manager to agree if working from home is a viable option; colleagues should not feel obliged to work from home if they are sick - if the colleague is not well enough to work from home, then the normal sickness absence procedure will apply. Colleagues should also ensure that annual leave is taken on a regular basis for their wellbeing and to ensure adequate rest.

9. Environmental Sustainability

One of the primary components of the carbon footprint of work relates to travel. Travelling thousands of miles each year for work/ meetings that can be carried out using video or telephone conferencing is an unsustainable and unproductive thing to do. Decisions about where we work, where we expect our colleagues to work, and the ways in which we communicate can increase or reduce our need for travel, our energy consumption and consumption of physical resources. We would therefore always encourage virtual meetings and challenge a face-to-face meeting if we believe it can be completed with the same outcome remotely.

Appendix 1 – Hybrid Policy FAQs

FAQ	***Answers***
Will our core business hours be the same as current office hours	Initially we will stay with our previous office hours, as more work is required to understand our customer demand (virtual and non-virtual) now and in the future. We will start reviewing these for all services as part of our new operating model, agreeing and clearly communicating any changes for each service.
How does this impact the current flexi-time scheme	The current flexi-time system is a recognised benefit for staff and although we believe these principles and guidelines provide greater flexibility, which ultimately should enable the current formal flexi-time scheme to be changed to an informal scheme, we understand that this may require further work in some teams to ensure staff and managers can manage with this change.
How will we ensure consistency between services and teams	We are very aware that some staff have not been able to be part of the current flexi time scheme, due to the nature of their work. We therefore want to ensure that these new principles and guidelines, provide as much flexibility as possible for all teams, recognising this will be more limited for some teams due to the nature of their role and the requirement on us all to ensure we meet the needs of our customer, service and teams. However, Managers will be working with their teams to discuss and determine suitable local arrangements to enable teams to work as flexibly as possible, this is captured in your Team Charter. Worker profiles ensuring consistency in terms of the support provided for each type of worker.
What changes are you planning to our buildings	We recognise our current and future working demands are no longer aligned to our previous office accommodation. However, we need to understand what will be required from our future office space in terms of capacity and customer need before we make any recommendations.
Will we change the way we recruit	Hybrid working is a key benefit and something we will want to promote as part of our recruitment process. We will therefore review our current recruitment process and standard documentation to ensure flexibility is a key part of this, especially as allowing people to work from home or a remote location will mean we can hopefully attract more applicants for roles we struggle to fill from people who live further away.
Will the Council help pay my heating bill costs from working from home	The council will not contribute to any additional household costs such as heating, lighting, electricity usage, wear and tear, parking costs, etc. as remote working arrangements are deemed a mutual benefit with savings in respect of transport costs, commuting time etc. It should be noted, the office is still available for those whose situation does not allow for them to work remotely or are concerned about additional personal costs. You are also able to claim tax relief if you regularly work from home. For more details please visit the Government's website: https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home

What happens if I don't have good enough phone reception or wifi	Employees must ensure they have an adequate mobile phone reception and an appropriate internet connection to allow them to work seamlessly from home. Employees are advised to contact their internet provider to ensure that the terms and conditions of their internet/broadband package cover provision of internet connection for business use at home. Employees who are considering working from home on a permanent or ad hoc basis are required to check that no restrictions apply in mortgage or tenancy agreements. The council will only fund additional broadband costs in exceptional circumstances. It should be noted, the office is still available for those whose situation does not allow for them to work remotely or are concerned about additional personal costs.
What happens if I require specialist equipment or my well-being is negatively impacted by working remotely	If you require specialist equipment, highlighted by your DSE assessment or a recommendation from Occupational Health, you should discuss this with the Health and Safety officer (health&safety@scambs.gov.uk) or the HR team (HR@Scambs.gov.uk). Where reasonable, the Council will endeavour to provide this for you. If your well-being is negatively impacted by working remotely please discuss this with HR or your line manager as soon as possible to see if any reasonable adjustments can be made, or any supports put in place. It should be noted, the office is still available for colleagues to work from if needed.
Am I insured to work from home	The council's existing liability insurance is not limited to covering a particular place or building and there are no exclusions or limitations in cover for staff working at home or on the go. However, it is important to ensure that reasonable care and precautions have been taken to minimise accident, injury, loss or damage and before any ways of working change. The relevant health and safety policies and risk assessments should be undertaken to ensure that precautions have been satisfied, In terms of personal motor insurance, employees are reminded that if they use their private vehicle for work, they have the appropriate business level of insurance. If employees will be undertaking any type of home working, it is advisable that they check their own household insurance that they intend to work from home as it could affect the terms of their own insurance. Some household insurance providers may charge an additional premium if homes are used for business purposes. Each insurance has its own attitude to business use at home and the council will not provide any allowance for personal household insurance. Please note if council equipment is accidentally damaged whilst in your home, it is covered under the council's insurance policy.
Do I need to complete a risk assessment for working from home	A risk assessment has been completed by our Health and Safety officer and is available on Insite here If you have any specific concerns or requirements please contact our Health and Safety officer to discuss (health&safety@scambs.gov.uk).
Can my permanent working pattern be changed	As per our current terms and conditions, there may be occasions where we need to ask our staff to change their working hours to meet a new demand. This is relevant to part time staff with an agreed set of working hours or

	full-time staff who have agreed a specific working pattern. This would be completed in consultation with you and following our correct processes. If you wish to request a change to your working hours or pattern please refer to our Flexible Working Policy.
How will the worker profiles be allocated	The worker profiles have been designed to enable each role in the council to be allocated to a profile, which has an agreed set of standard equipment and support allocated to it. The role you undertake will be allocated to either the hybrid or fixed profile and then if your role is determined as a hybrid role, you will be asked about your personal preference e.g., prefer to work mainly from home or from an SCDC building. Please note, the flexibility within the hybrid roles will then be agreed between a manager and member of staff based on the policy and principles, and subject to business needs.
My role has been determined as a fixed role, how can I work flexibly	We are not able to offer as much flexibility for fixed roles, due to the nature of the job the roles undertake. However, we wish to encourage flexibility of working style for all and within the more limited boundaries of the fixed roles, we are happy to have team discussions about what flexibility can be offered and still enable the team to meet the needs of the customer, service, and each other.
Is there a requirement for me to come into the office every week	There is no corporate requirement for all SCDC staff to have a set number of days in an SCDC building per week. However, the benefits of face-to-face collaboration are recognised and encouraged to ensure team performance and removal of silo working. Coming into any of our buildings will be based on the worker profile, activity requirements and your team charter.
Can I complete caring duties and work at the same time	We do not believe it is possible to conduct caring duties whilst at work. However, we are happy for you to flex your hours to enable you to complete caring duties throughout the day. This falls under the same criteria of meeting the needs of your service, customer, and team.
Will all levels of staff be able to be hybrid workers	All roles, including our leadership team will have their role classified into either a fixed or hybrid worker profile. If your role (regardless of level) is classified as a hybrid worker, then you will be able to agree what flexible working means to meet the needs of your service, customer and team.
Will working in this more flexible way really mean we are being greener and more sustainable?	We believe the reduction in staff travel will have a positive impact on our sustainability agenda, however we do understand that for some households this might be slightly off-set by increased carbon outputs in staff houses, due to working from home
Will we produce new guidelines on how we use different communication channels	We are very aware that there are now many different communication routes available to customers and colleagues and understand that looking at how we manage and prioritise different communication channels needs to be reviewed. We don't believe there will be one size fits all across SCDC, however we are clear that some of the key areas we will need to review are: • Use of personal mobiles, • Social media and use of groups such as WhatsApp groups, • Impact on staff of taking difficult calls at any time or location, • Needing to switch off,

If I need to change my hours to work extra, will I get this time back	We would hope to avoid unplanned evening or weekend work however realise on occasions this does happen. Any additional time should be recorded on our flexi system, and then taken back at a time agreed between you and your manager. NB: Accruing excessive hours over a period of time is not an acceptable way of working and managers must agree how hours will be 'taken back' if additional hours are required to meet a specific service demand.
Have we looked at other organisations and considered best practise from these	Yes, we have looked at other councils and businesses flexible and agile working practices and policies. In addition, we have worked with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) to look at their recommendations and research in preparing and implementing hybrid and flexible working. Our focus is on ensuring that introducing a flexible working approach delivers benefits to SCDC in all areas; inclusion, sustainability, talent, wellbeing, engagement, performance
Will my travel time and cost to the office be covered by the Council	Travel to and from the main office location will be completed by staff in your own time and at your own expense.