



SOMERSET COUNCIL DYNAMIC WORKING STRATEGY

FINAL DRAFT



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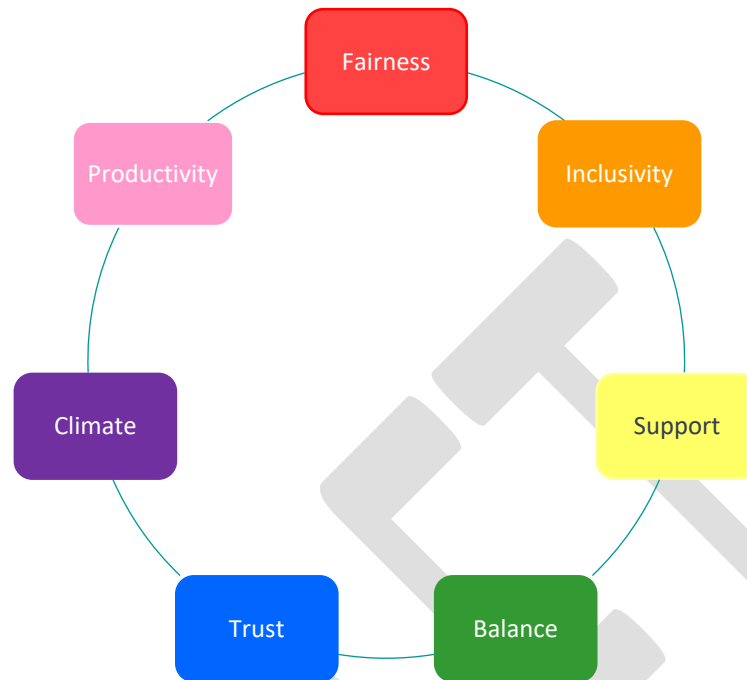
1. Dynamic Working Introduction

Somerset Council is embracing more innovative and flexible ways of working and delivering services to create a culture of trust, high performance, and wellbeing. The aim of this strategy is to support employees to create a balanced life, supporting their overall wellbeing and professional success: accepting that this will look different for different roles.

Overall, our people across all five authorities have recognised the benefits of dynamic working practices and are keen to continue working flexibly in Somerset Council. However, we must continue to listen, review, and improve how we do this to ensure everyone is supported to be happy and productive. Further information on the benefits and considerations of dynamic working can be found in Appendix A.

Therefore, it is felt that there is a strong rationale to transition to a person-based dynamic working approach allowing choice wherever possible. Key to this is the understanding that no two situations are the same with different service and role requirements, and individual circumstances to be considered.

The primary guiding principles for this strategy are:



Fairness: No employee should be disadvantaged either personally or professionally by how, where and when they work.

Inclusivity: Embracing a diverse and inclusive workforce, where no employee should be disadvantaged due to a protected characteristic and difference is valued.

Support: Every individual's specific circumstance will be considered, and they will be supported to achieve their potential.

Balance: All employees will be supported to achieve a healthy work/life balance.

Trust: All employees will be treated as trusted professionals.

Climate: Work style choices should consider, and seek to minimise, our organisational carbon footprint.

Productivity: Maximising organisational and individual productivity and effectiveness.

2. Review

- a. Regularity of strategy reviews
 - i. This strategy will be reviewed six-monthly for first three years, and then annually thereafter.
 - ii. A review could also be triggered by exceptional circumstances, for example, a national lockdown.
 - iii. This strategy has been developed in partnership with employees, elected members, trade unions, partner organisations and they will continue to be consulted during each review.

3. Glossary of terms (as used specifically in this strategy)

Dynamic Working	<p>Refers to the role specific ability to flex the how, when and where you work, dependent on the role, to best meet the needs of the customers, the service, and any personal circumstances.</p> <p>An agreement to work dynamically is not permanent and is not a formal change to an employee's terms and conditions or contractual arrangements.</p>
Hybrid Working	<p>Refers to a form of flexible working where an employee spends some of their time working in the office and some time working remotely, either from home or another suitable location.</p>
Home Working	<p>Refers to an employee permanently spending the majority of their time working from their own home, with the agreement of the manager and with a suitable and safe workstation set up. This can be a formal contractual arrangement, but not always.</p>
Remote Working	<p>Refers to an employee working away from the employee's main or designated workplace, either at home or another suitable location.</p>
Flexible Working	<p>Refers to an employer authorising a change to the employee's contracted working hours or place of work through a flexible working request. Further details can be found in the Flexible Working Policy.</p>
Ebb and Flow	<p>Ebb and Flow is a way of sharing, optimising and managing workspace in the office. Under our ways of working, desk provision is on a ratio basis helping us make the most efficient use of space available and allows us to create other working spaces such as collaboration areas.</p>
Presenteeism	<p>Refers to an employee working whilst unwell, potentially resulting in a significant negative impact on the health and productivity of both the individual and the organisation.</p>

4. How decisions will be made

Dynamic working arrangements are to be informally agreed and reviewed as part of ongoing dialogue between the employee and manager, allowing swift adaptability based on the needs of customers, the service, and the employee. The efficiency and effectiveness of the service will take precedence; however, employee preferences and personal circumstances, such as caring responsibilities, will be accommodated as far as reasonably possible.

Your contractual place of work remains unchanged, and it is expected that most employees will be required to work from an office location at some point, whether this is for a wellbeing reasons, a team meeting or 121, learning and development activities or a specific work task. Similarly, there may be circumstances where we ask an employee to work remotely, or from another place as we consider reasonable, when they would otherwise expect to attend work in the office, for instance:

- for operational needs, for example if there are too many employees in an office on specific days, in line with the ebb and flow model or;
- for reasons related to external circumstances, for example in the event of a lockdown/government guidance that employees should work from home, a temporary building emergency, or to enable a property refurbishment.

In all cases, employees will be given as much notice as possible.

We continue to recognise the value of in-person collaboration and connection, especially in areas such as wellbeing, learning and development, creative workshops, induction, team meetings and 121s. We will continue to encourage employees to regularly come together in-person and will provide sufficient spaces to enable this.

Team meetings will be held in person on a regular basis. Managers will hold 121s in person as appropriate and agreed. If you are asked to attend the office, there is an expectation that you will attend, but again you will be given as much notice as possible.

We are recommending that teams create a Team Charter (Appendix C); a collaboratively agreed way of working that relates specifically to their service and customer demands, flow of work and individual team members working arrangements.

5. Suitability of roles and eligibility considerations

There may be some roles within this organisation that do not support dynamic working all the time, such as fixed location workers, for example our library employees, employees on rotas such as those in customer service teams, or trade employees. However, in line with our ambition to create a more dynamic workforce, we remain open to discussing more dynamic working arrangements with any employee.

The following factors will be considered when assessing eligibility for dynamic working:

- The suitability of the role and whether the work is capable of being undertaken equally effectively from home, another location or with varying working hours.
- Whether any additional costs incurred as a result of dynamic working practices are reasonable, not including any agreed reasonable adjustments or DSE requirements.
- The suitability of the home or other remote working environment, including the technical accessibility and connectivity.
- The needs of the employee for more dynamic working arrangements.
- Any potential negative impact on the customer or service delivery.
- Any potential negative impact on colleagues or the team.
- Any potential negative impact on the employee of working from home, another remote working location or differing hours.
- The potential for maintaining good communication with the employee.
- The employee's personal risk assessment or PEEP
- The impact on data protection.

Please also note:

- Where it has been agreed that the employee can work dynamically it does not automatically mean that the employee will get the arrangement that they have requested.
- A dynamic working arrangement may not be agreed if there are performance concerns.
- A dynamic working arrangement may not be agreed if there is a training requirement and/or supervision to deliver a specific piece of work.
- To maximise the efficient use of office space, team and individual dynamic working arrangements will need to be co-ordinated, so that desk space can be shared effectively. This may mean that working patterns and arrangements have to fit around locally agreed 'ebb and flow' working.

6. Inclusion statement

Somerset Council values diversity among our workforce. We continually work to create inclusive and safe workplaces, where everyone is able to bring their whole selves to work and are valued and celebrated for their difference. By supporting dynamic working practices wherever possible, we hope to be able to attract, retain and develop a diverse, inclusive and successful workforce.

7. Working environment & equipment

In order to effectively work from home or remotely, Somerset Council will provide the employee with the appropriate equipment for the role.

Employees must take due care of any equipment provided to them. A DSE assessment will be completed by all employees, and any additional

recommended equipment will be provided, and any identified hazards will be removed.

The suitability of the working environment in terms of its technical accessibility/connectivity may impact on the employee's ability to work dynamically and may require them to work from an office base.

8. Wellbeing and work/life balance

Working hours

The health, safety and wellbeing of our employees is a top priority for Somerset Council. Whilst we appreciate there are peaks and troughs in workloads, dynamic working does not mean we expect employees to regularly work over and above their contracted hours. When working from home it can be harder to have a clear distinction between working and personal life, with the temptation to work beyond normal working hours. Employee wellbeing and a healthy work/life balance is incredibly important to us as an employer, so we support employees to balance their working days and not to work excessive hours. We encourage employees who are struggling and regularly working excessive hours to discuss this with their manager or the HR/People Function.

Dynamic working may mean that some employees choose to send messages and emails outside of regular hours. There is no expectation that the employees who receive them should reply until the next working day.

Sickness and presenteeism

When working remotely, there may be a temptation for an employee to continue to work when they should be absent due to sickness. Employees should remember that if they are too unwell to work, they should follow the Sickness Absence Policy as normal, regardless of where they may be working.

For further information please refer to supporting policies:

- Sickness Absence Policy
- Wellbeing Strategy

9. Line management

Line management responsibilities remain the same regardless of any dynamic working agreements, including managing employee performance, development, and wellbeing. Where an employee is working from home or remotely for significant periods it is recommended the line manager and employee agree mechanisms for regular communication.

Where interactions with employees is virtual, whether as a team or individual, we recommend a camera-on policy to ensure quality engagement and participation. We are also encouraging managers to work with their team to populate a Team Charter (Appendix C) to ensure everyone in the team is clear on how, when and where they are working.

The HR/People Function are available for support and guidance.

10. Performance management

All existing performance management arrangements continue to apply until a

new performance management approach is agreed, but existing arrangements should be tailored to support dynamic working. Consideration should be made about the appropriateness of the location for any performance management interactions.

11. Recruitment and Retention

Our approach to dynamic working helps to ensure that Somerset Council is an employer of choice. By allowing our employees to have more control over managing how, when and where they work, consequently enjoying a good work/life balance, whilst remaining productive and engaged in their roles, we are able to successfully recruit and retain of the best employees.

12. Learning and Development

Somerset Council are committed to the development of their employees, regardless of any dynamic working arrangements. Wherever possible training will be provided in a range of delivery options, but employees may be required to attend office sites for specific training activities and inductions.

There may be certain circumstances where more senior employees or managers need to work from office locations to provide in-person support, such as induction or supporting new or inexperienced colleagues.

We will provide training to support the transition to dynamic working, such as use of technology, line management, and managing virtual and hybrid meetings.

13. Climate

Somerset is recognised as a leader and exemplar for the Climate Emergency agenda regionally and nationally. The Dynamic Working Strategy reflects this climate agenda and as employees working for Somerset Council, we are taking individual steps to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030, and we understand how working dynamically contributes to this.

Reducing our energy usage and driving down our carbon footprint is a key part of our Climate Emergency carbon reduction culture, therefore Somerset Council actively encourages greener solutions to getting to work, for example car sharing, cycling, walking or using public transport where possible. In order to facilitate this, Somerset Council will aim to provide the necessary facilities, such as bike parking and shower facilities where possible.

14. Other practicalities

Travel and Parking

Travel and parking arrangements are still being discussed and remain to be confirmed.

Meetings

When deciding on the best format for a meeting we recommend that employees consider the impacts of any travel, on both time and the carbon footprint, and what format will maximise attendance or participation. Consider the nature and content of the meeting and any individual requirements, for example, accessibility needs, when agreeing the most appropriate location. In-person meetings can be

more effective when bringing a new team together or when introducing new employees to a team and may also be more suitable if the meeting contains sensitive items.

At Somerset Council we operate an all-staff **calendar open** and **camera on** (virtual attendees) approach to help us plan and hold more effective meetings.

15. Health & safety

Ensuring our employees have a safe working environment is a top priority. Therefore, we will continue to use the following tools:

- DSE Assessments
- Health & Safety risk assessments – personal and operational, including dynamic risk assessment
- Data protection and confidentiality guidelines

16. Contractual implications

This is about allowing you more freedom to manage your how, when and where you work.

Your terms and conditions, contractual working hours and agreed working pattern as noted on our HR & Payroll System will remain the same, unless a change is agreed as part of a formal flexible working request.

17. Set-up, costs, and expenses

Somerset Council cannot provide any additional financial assistance for any employee choosing to work dynamically, beyond providing basic appropriate equipment for the role any in line with any reasonable adjustments.

18. Tax implications

Please see the HMRC website for current guidance and more information.

19. You should also consider:

- b. Mortgage, lease, and insurance implications
- c. Employer access
- d. Moving home
- e. Security, data protection and confidentiality

Employees must ensure that they have the appropriate provisions in place to support their dynamic working, for example, ensuring that they are covered under their home insurance for working at home and indeed that any mortgage agreement in place supports home working.

If employees move home, please ensure you update the Employee Self Service portal in the normal way.

20. Elected Members

Our elected members fully support this approach to dynamic working.

21. Customers

Service delivery is our priority, and it is imperative that customers are not

adversely affected by dynamic working. Team agreements will be in place to make sure we are able to meet the needs of our most vulnerable customers, during the opening hours of the customer contact points. We will also work to enable more services to be available online, so those customers that can self-serve do, and are able to do it at a time and place that is convenient to them.

22. Associated Strategies and Policies

- Leave Policy
- Flexi Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Wellbeing Strategy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Learning and Development Strategy
- Climate Strategy
- Asset Strategy

Appendix A – Background data and strategy rational

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix C – Team Charter

Appendix A: Background data and strategy rational

Benefits of dynamic working

Research by The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) has shown that post pandemic, there has been significant interest in more flexible ways of working, and that hybrid and dynamic working options have created new employee expectations and desires. Benefits for the individual include:

- A better work–life balance
- A greater ability to focus with fewer distractions
- More time for family and friends
- Saved commuting time and parking costs
- IT upskilling and higher levels of motivation
- Higher levels of employee job satisfaction and reduced absence rates

Other broader organisational benefits include:

- Greater access to talent/improved talent pools by overcoming geographic limitations
- There is a global trend towards dynamic and hybrid working opportunities that we need to keep up with for attraction and retention.
- A reduction in commuting hours.
- Alignment with our climate emergency and green agenda
- Saving on asset expenditure and premises costs
- The ability, as an employer, to attract, support and realise the benefits of a more diverse and inclusive workforce, including those with a wide range of disabilities and caring responsibilities, but offering more flexibility

Continuously changing national guidance during the pandemic meant that we had to rapidly embrace home and hybrid working practices. Throughout this period all 5 authorities in Somerset engaged with their people to understand how these new working arrangements were working for them and what the impact was on service delivery.

Note: survey completed by majority of office-based workers.

Benefits as highlighted by our employees

- Around 85-90% of employees reported role motivation & productivity has remained the same when either home or hybrid working.
- Over 60% employees reported working at home has allowed them to better manage their wellbeing and more than half feel they have achieved a better work/life balance. Less commuting time was often given as the top reason for this.
- Over 80% of people feel they are still able to work effectively with others and a similar amount have felt their continued contact with managers has been

good.

- Consistently over 90% of employees feel levels of trust have increased due to more home and hybrid working.
- Most employees are happy about how less travel is supporting our climate change agenda.
- Over 80% of employees across all five authorities want to continue hybrid working arrangements.
- The Cultural Workshops have shown a desire to continue hybrid working to be the second most common theme.

Organisational considerations and concerns

- Communication methods and impacts – Most office-based employees report that Microsoft Teams has worked well for internal communication. However, we are aware that external communication is more challenging with no designated channel. Also, those without devices, specifically desktop computers or laptops, find it harder to connect and communicate.
- Service impact – This will have to be carefully monitored and considered as the transition to permanent dynamic working takes place. Services which require face-to-face customer interaction have remained relatively unchanged, and whilst there was disruption during the pandemic, there has largely been a return to normal working practices. However, some services are still reporting negative impact and are struggling to see how dynamic working will work for them.
- Access to office-based technology – some services require access to specific equipment, such as printers, and offices need to be set up in such a way that access is easy. Wherever possible, there must continue to be progress towards a paperless environment to support more effective hybrid working.
- Hybrid enabling technology – meeting rooms should be kitted out with appropriate technology such as video conferencing equipment, where possible, to enable hybrid meetings.
- Managing hybrid teams – managing a team's wellbeing, development and performance in a hybrid environment presents new challenges and we need to ensure that our managers are adequately trained and supported.
- Wellbeing and isolation – access to office sites and connection with colleagues must remain an easy and flexible option for all employees. Isolation and the negative impacts of extended home working were raised as top concerns in all five authorities. Some also reported a blurring of the distinction between home and work life.

Issues as highlighted by our employees

- A lack of social contact and difficulty remaining in connected with colleagues and our teams

- A loss of identity as a Council employee
- Worries about less visibility and the impact on opportunities
- Greater reliance on team meetings the cascade of important information, and where team meetings aren't happening people can be left without essential information
- A difficult home working environment, perhaps with other people in the house, caring responsibilities, inappropriate working environment, broadband issues, or welfare concerns
- The lack of commute and easy access to device can result in working excessive hours
- Physical and mental isolation
- Technological barriers, both at home and the transition between home and office

Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment



Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA, please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer

Organisation prepared for Somerset Council

Version V2 Date Completed 19 December 2022

Description of what is being impact assessed

Ways of Working – Dynamic Working Strategy:

Pre Covid the Council(s) worked on an office-based basis with local arrangements in place for staff to undertake limited working from home, often no more than one or two days a week.

As part of the formation of the new Somerset Council we are moving to a more flexible way of working which may change the ratio of time some employees spend working from home and the time spent working from the office or another location.

The new Council are proposing a 'Dynamic Working Strategy' in which the working environment is driven by employee preference providing the organisational, service and customer need is met. This will enable us to deliver services where and when they are needed, optimise our Asset rationalisation programme and the use of our buildings, and maximise the use of technology to deliver services more efficiently and effectively.

All employees whose preference is to work in an office-based setting will be accommodated.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such

as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

Data held on SAP and other payroll systems - Somerset Council workforce will be an amalgamation of Somerset County Council, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council, and new employees. Therefore, we will predominantly be drawing on the existing workforce data of these groups. Data held by Somerset Intelligence Partnership and Data from all organisations Staff Surveys.

18.8% of residents in Somerset reported a long-term health condition or disability, and of combined workforce, approx. 6.5-7% have declared a disability.

Females represent a greater proportion of the workforce in all but one of the Councils, but this is more pronounced in Somerset County Council (72%) and Mendip (77%). Sedgemoor District Council have a higher proportion of males (59%) to females.

11% of the population of Somerset identify as unpaid Carers. Of a sample 55% of Somerset County Council workforce (excluding Schools) who answered the 2021 Staff Survey 22% of respondents indicated that they provide care for someone who has a disability, long or terminal illness.

48% of the population of Somerset live in areas classed as rural. Of a sample 55% of Somerset County Council workforce (excluding Schools) who answered the 2021 Staff Survey 32 % of respondents stated they did not live in a town or city.

Please note, not all Councils hold data for all protected characteristics. For the full data available, please see the reports attached.

We have used data from Staff Surveys to illustrate employees' views on ways of working, while a majority show a preference to work in this way there is evidence that show some staff prefer working in the office. Over 80% of employees across all 5 organisations indicate they want to continue hybrid working arrangements with over 60% reporting that working from home helps manage their wellbeing and over 50% state that hybrid working allows them to achieve a better work/life balance (see below).

Data from ongoing Behaviour & Culture Workshops (see below).

We intend to look at data about building access, desk, and parking usage at office sites across the organisations once this has been collated.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

HR Colleagues from LGR Ways of Working & Wellbeing Workstream & Cross Cutting Group - Property, FM, ICT, Customers & Partners, TU Representatives (**still to be reviewed by JNF**), Colleagues involved in the SCC Ways of Working Project, SCC Employment Equalities Officer,

Other workstream leads, staff bodies (Networks) are being consulted and the Strategy and EIA will be amended accordingly.

Analysis of impact on protected groups

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<p>Some older employees may be less familiar with new technology and find new ways of working more challenging.</p> <p>Younger employees are likely to have less experience of the workplace and may find remote working more difficult as new starters or during the induction period.</p> <p>Some younger employees may find it more difficult to learn through observation, form relationships and understand nuances of office etiquette virtually.</p> <p>Younger employees may not have access to their own suitable space to WFH and may be living with parents or in shared accommodation. This may also be applicable to other age groups where there are multiple occupants where finding a suitable space to WFH is difficult.</p>	☒	☐	☐
Disability	<p>Some positive outcomes for some employees with a disability where the more flexible way of working has enabled them to better manage their health through having more autonomy in where and when they are able to work.</p>	☒	☐	☐

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
	<p>Less time spent in the office or less employees attending the office may reduce the amount of time for face to face interaction and some employees with a disability may be at increased risk of social isolation due to a loss of social interaction that would normally take place in an office setting.</p> <p>Fewer numbers of staff in the office may compound existing barriers for employees with disabilities working in an office, for example there may be less people to assist employees with disabilities with PEEPs working in the office or a loss of interaction for staff with mental health issues who find these interactions beneficial.</p> <p>Consideration is required for those employees with disabilities with PEEPs in place to ensure they are not negatively impacted by any lack of staff available to assist with evacuations to ensure they have a choice about accessing the office and interacting with colleagues in their team in an office setting.</p> <p>Some employees with disabilities will require specialist equipment to work from home or the office or to ensure they can fulfil their roles from both home and the office. Likewise, some employees may struggle to carry equipment back and forth between home and office.</p> <p>Some employees with disabilities may not be physically able to move equipment or clear their desks. For example, some employees have specialist chairs. These may be employees with musculoskeletal conditions and are therefore not able to collect/move their chair to a storage area.</p> <p>Some employees with disabilities may be unable to hotdesk and will require fixed desks as a reasonable adjustment. For example, this may include employees with mobility disabilities, OCD, autism, and visual</p>			

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
	<p>impairments.</p> <p>Employees with learning difficulties may find remote working more difficult and may require more regular practical or face to face support and may also benefit from having a consistent working environment.</p> <p>Greater flexibility around office location may mean some employees with disabilities might not be familiar with buildings or layout.</p>			
Gender reassignment	Due to the nature of open plan offices and teams sharing spaces employees who are transitioning or have been through gender reassignment may be working with unfamiliar colleagues which may cause anxiety/concern.	☒	☐	☐
Marriage and civil partnership	Partners/Spouse may not wish to work together in the same space as they live.	☒	☐	☐
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Pregnant employees may have specialist equipment such as chairs particularly in the third trimester of pregnancy & may be unable to move/collect from storage areas.</p> <p>Employees returning from maternity leave may still be breastfeeding and will need a suitable space to feed, express and store milk if working in an office.</p> <p>Introduction of Dynamic Working Strategy may allow increased choice of where pregnant employees can work where service demands allow.</p>	☒	☐	☐

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Race and ethnicity	<p>Where an employees first language is not English there may be difficulties understanding the language used for new technology.</p> <p>Cultural differences in households may mean working together is not an option at home or there is not enough space to accommodate working from home.</p>	☒	☐	☐
Religion or belief	<p>Potential to enable greater flexibility for religious observance and customs as the dynamic way of working gives employees a greater degree of choice about where and when they work. For those with less choice and flexibility, a conversation with their manager will need to establish how this can be enabled.</p>	☐	☒	☐
Sex	<p>Disproportionate number of female employees (approx. 70 to 30) affected by the need to balance work and childcare or other caring responsibilities. Some of this might be easier to manage under dynamic working.</p> <p>Consideration of the impact on those who must work in the office or other work location more regularly to meet service delivery.</p>	☐	☐	☒
Sexual orientation	<p>While Services/Teams will be allocated desk zones in office locations these spaces will be shared so employees may be working with unfamiliar colleagues which may cause increased anxiety/concern.</p>	☒	☐	☐
Other, e.g., carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers – as with childcare, disproportionate number of females balancing work and other caring responsibilities. This is not limited to females only and many employees will share caring responsibilities and have caring responsibilities for someone other 	☒	☐	☐

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
	<p>than a child. Evidence that those working in a flexible way have been better able to manage these combined responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans – possibility of difficulty managing the level of flexibility where a highly structured approach has been the norm. • Low income – potential for issues with space availability, costs of heating and lighting, affordability of transport to the office and this can negatively impact those staff's ability to either work from home comfortably or make it more difficult to attend a workplace. • Rurality – access to Broadband will present challenges for some. • Public transport availability may also impact those wanting to go into the office for specific meetings, but access to public transport is not available or where it is available timetables do not make this easy. • Employees designated work base is not based on location nearest to home address, some employees may have to travel further than others and incur more expense. 			

Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Continue to develop programme of support for new tech and WoW - There are easy to access tutorials on the ICT Training site and training on The Learning Centre or one to one support can be arranged, either by WoW or through Technology Champions.	Select date	Andrew Fisk		<input type="checkbox"/>
Onboarding process recommends that Managers ensure some work/training is face to face with new starters and their team, particularly during the induction period.	31/03/2023	Clive Mallon/Helen Thomas		<input type="checkbox"/>
Younger employees can be assigned a more experienced workplace buddy/mentor.	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>
Setting up of a Young Persons Network.	01/11/2022	Misha Liddiatt		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Younger employees who prefer to work in the office or do not have a suitable space to work from home can be accommodated in an office. Suitability of the workspace and DSE assessment as part of Induction process.	Select date	Clive Mallon/Helen Thomas		<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees with disabilities who prefer to work in the office all or some of the time can be accommodated in an office and have choice about where they work in	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
line with their needs and the service delivery need. Responsibility to ensure arrangements are suitable sit with line managers and regular reviews will need to be in place to ensure that the working arrangements are still the most effective to support wellbeing.				
Engagement with employee disability network to ensure needs are being met or where this is not active or representative will need to ensure there is clear signposting for support for reasonable adjustments.	Select date	Michelle Anderson		<input type="checkbox"/>
Where employees require a fixed desk or help with moving equipment, including specialist chairs or require more face-to-face working, it is the manager's responsibility to ensure that a suitable desk is allocated and that there are sufficient team members available to assist in the office or that a buddy has been assigned. Where lockers are considered suitable for storage, ensure lockers are nearby and easily accessible. Specialist chairs will need to be stored in the area the team is working in.	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>
Where employees have PEEPs in place for when working in an office ensure sufficient/additional members of the team/staff are trained to undertake evacuation chair training, ensure sufficient staff attend the office and have a rota in place. If this is not possible provide a dedicated ground floor space where employees and some of their colleagues can work	Select date	Manager/Property/FM		<input type="checkbox"/>

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
together.				
Whether duplicate specialist equipment will be required both at home and at work will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and as recommended by Employment Equalities Officer/H&S/Access to work as reasonable adjustments.	Select date	Employment EO		<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Ensure buildings, access, facilities, equipment is DDA compliant.</p> <p>Are doors automated</p> <p>Are lifts available as alternative to stairs</p> <p>Is there sufficient Accessible/Blue Badge Parking</p> <p>Is there clear signage</p> <p>Does the building have an Induction Loop System</p>	Select date	Property		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure technology is DDA compliant and compatible with specialist software, ICT may need to provide additional support to ensure systems work.	Select date	ICT		<input type="checkbox"/>
Where staff have anxieties around sexual orientation or gender reassignment and working with unfamiliar colleagues Managers with the support of HR and Equalities Employment Officer can put together a support package/plan on a case-by-case basis that works for the individual for example limiting some	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
desks to immediate team only.				
Employees who prefer not to work from home and to work from an office base will be able to work in an office.	Select date	Property Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers to regularly check the working arrangements are satisfactory as part of one-to-one meetings.		Manager		
Temporarily assign the same desk or match pregnant employees with other office-based employees to help with the movement of any equipment.	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers are responsible for conducting Health and Safety risk assessments at work for pregnant employees and those who have recently given birth. Managers need to be mindful that these will need to take place both in the workplace and at home if appropriate.	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Consideration will need to be given for provision for breast feeding and storage of breast milk by Property/Asset Workstream.</p> <p>Provision is currently available in the First Aid Room or AG18 in CH, the First Aid room in Bridgwater House, the First Aid room or private booth in Brympton Way, the Ground Floor PHN room or private booth Shape</p>	Select date	Property/FM		<input type="checkbox"/>

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Mendip, the Ground Floor PHN room, or First Floor Managers Office in Glastonbury Hub.				
Any provision or programme of training and support for new technology and ways of working will need to consider English may not be an employee's first language.	Select date	Andrew Fisk T&D Lead		<input type="checkbox"/>
Managers to regularly check how the working arrangements impact on caring responsibilities and whether these can be mitigated as part of one-to-one meetings.	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees individual circumstances will require a conversation between the manager and employee to find workable solutions or to trial things with reviews.	Select date	Manager		
Those affected by poor Broadband will be able to work in the office.	Select date	Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>
What is happening with designated office review? - Staff may be able to work at the office located nearest to home address.				
If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.				

Action taken/to be taken		Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Completed by:		Cat Tyson			
Date		16.12.22			
Signed off by:		Amanda Kotvics			
Date		21 st December 2022			
Equality Lead/Manager sign off date:		Michelle Anderson 19 th December 2022			
To be reviewed by: (officer name)		Cat Tyson			
Review date:		16.01.23 – Feedback from JNF held on 11.01.23 30.01.23 – Feedback from HR Policy Committee held on 24.01.23			

Appendices to EIA

Appendix B1 - Section from Dynamic Working Strategy Appendix A

Benefits as highlighted by our employees

- Around 85-90% of employees reported role motivation & productivity has remained the same when either home or hybrid working.
- Over 60% employees reported working at home has allowed them to better manage their wellbeing and more than half feel they have achieved a better work/life balance. Less commuting time was often given as the top reason for this.
- Over 80% of people feel they are still able to work effectively with others and a similar amount have felt their continued contact with managers has been good.
- Consistently over 90% of employees feel levels of trust have increased due to more home and hybrid working.
- Most employees are happy about how less travel is supporting our climate change agenda.
- Over 80% of employees across all five authorities want to continue hybrid working arrangements.
- The Cultural Workshops have shown a desire to continue hybrid working to be the second most common theme.

Organisational considerations and concerns

- Communication methods and impacts – Most office-based employees report that Microsoft Teams has worked well for internal communication. However, we are aware that external communication is more challenging with no designated channel. Also, those without devices, specifically desktop computers or laptops, find it harder to connect and communicate.
- Service impact – This will have to be carefully monitored and considered as the transition to permanent dynamic working takes place. Services which require face-to-face customer interaction have remained relatively unchanged, and whilst there was disruption during the pandemic, there has largely been a return to normal working practices. However, some services are still reporting negative impact and are struggling to see how dynamic working will work for them.
- Access to office-based technology – some services require access to specific equipment, such as printers, and offices need to be set up in such a way that access is easy. Wherever possible, there must continue to be progress towards a paperless environment to support more effective hybrid working.
- Hybrid enabling technology – meeting rooms should be kitted out with appropriate technology such as video conferencing

equipment, where possible, to enable hybrid meetings.

- Managing hybrid teams – managing a team’s wellbeing, development and performance in a hybrid environment presents new challenges and we need to ensure that our managers are adequately trained and supported.
- Wellbeing and isolation – access to office sites and connection with colleagues must remain an easy and flexible option for all employees. Isolation and the negative impacts of extended home working were raised as top concerns in all five authorities. Some also reported a blurring of the distinction between home and work life.

Issues as highlighted by our employees

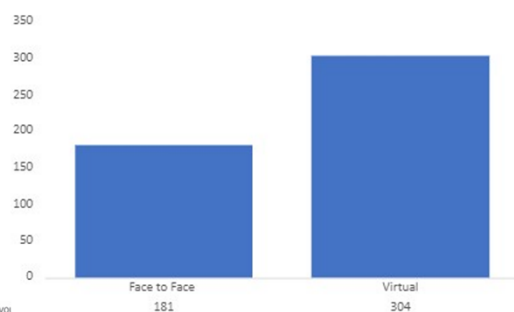
- A lack of social contact and difficulty remaining in connected with colleagues and our teams
- A loss of identity as a Council employee
- Worries about less visibility and the impact on opportunities
- Greater reliance on team meetings the cascade of important information, and where team meetings aren’t happening people can be left without essential information
- A difficult home working environment, perhaps with other people in the house, caring responsibilities, inappropriate working environment, broadband issues, or welfare concerns
- The lack of commute and easy access to device can result in working excessive hours
- Physical and mental isolation
- Technological barriers, both at home and the transition between home and office

Appendix B2 - Culture & Behaviour Workshop Information

Culture & Behaviour Workshops

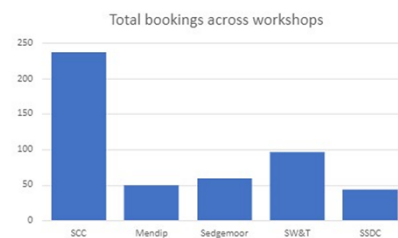
Data has been analysed for all of the Round 1 Workshops, 15 in total, 8 face to face, 7 virtual which took place during the period of April to July 2022

Workshop attendance 485 across all events



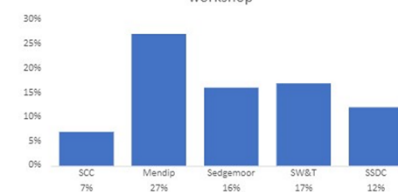
Together we are delivering you
New Somerset Council

By authority...



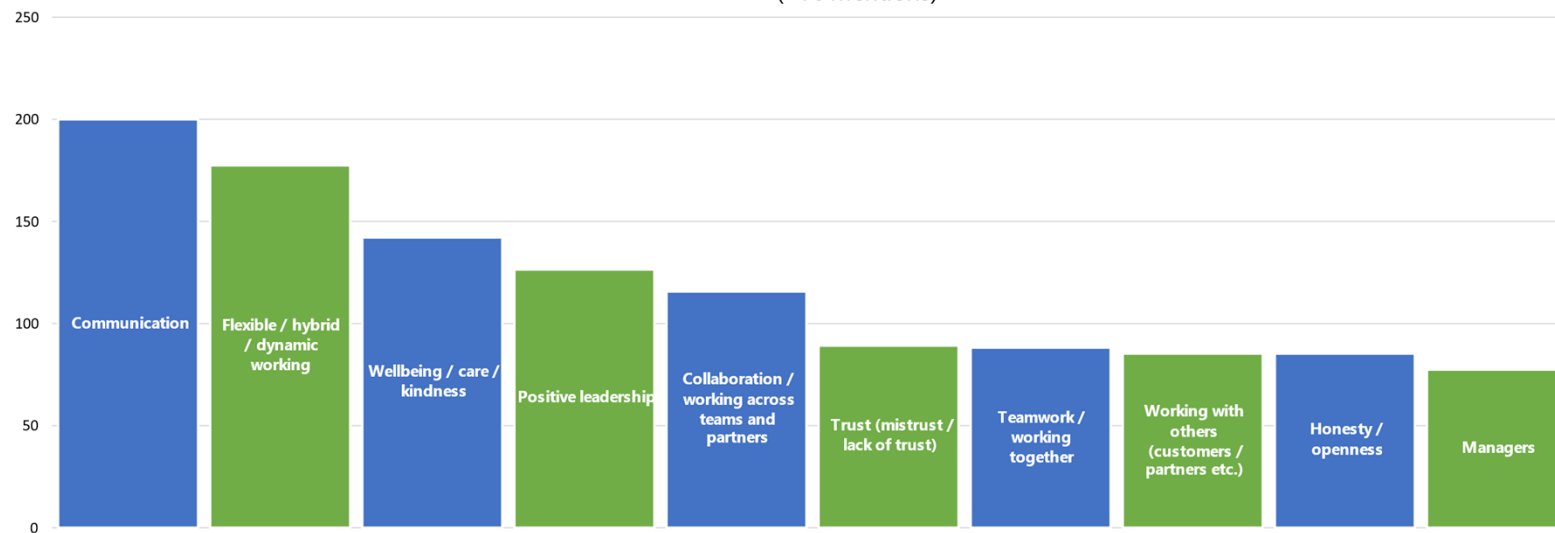
Together we are delivering you
New Somerset Council

Percentage of employees booked onto a workshop



Top 10 mentioned themes

(> 70 mentions)



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Top 10 ranked themes (based on frequency of mentions across workshop activities).

Ref	Staff want....	Staff do not want...	Quotes	Relevant theme(s)
A - Communication	To be well informed across the whole organisation, with consistent messaging from leaders and managers – an accessible culture where expectations are clear.	To be kept in the dark, inconsistent messages or lack of clarity about structure, roles and responsibilities, misinformation or lots of jargon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“CEO messages, personable zoom meetings, feels like he cared, we mattered” •“Cross organisation communication and updates to better understand different services (...)” •“Opportunities to understand new service teams, start from scratch and get things right” •“Regular briefings and mechanisms for senior management/leadership to be available and accessible” •“Communication (capturing all staff and different methods)” •“Setting the right tone” •“Jargon – too much which confuses customers” •“Engage staff in strategy!” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Communication [1] •Clarity of roles, responsibilities, processes, teams, structure and service areas [14] •Engagement / engaged / consultation / involvement [24] •Accessible / access / accessibility [40] <p>Induction / onboarding Staff Q&As</p>
B – Dynamic working practices	A dynamic working approach, which supports effective teamworking, focuses on balance and is enabled by the right tools (e.g. policies, technology and work spaces).	Working practices which dictate how and when work should be done without consideration of personal or business need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“Flexible working inclusive for staff who have caring responsibilities and also need to work locally (...)” •“Not being flexible in how colleagues get their work done (dictating hours i.e. 9 - 5)” •“Flexible working – hours, blended working, environment, to do things differently” •“Unhealthy working hours / practices” •“Trust: work life balance - hybrid working - paperless. Improved processes enable flexibility” •“Shared accessible workspaces” •“Adopt newer technologies to help us move forwards” •“Different teams may require policies and procedures that suit the ways they work - not one size fits all e.g. social care may have a different need to communicate than economic development” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Flexible / dynamic / hybrid / agile ways of working / responsive [2] •Technology / digital / systems [26] •Working environment / space [45] <p>Policies</p>
C – Cross- team, partnership and external working	Good working relationships across teams and with partners (including Members) to understand and plan how best to support those we work for.	Disconnected services that do not interact with each other or collaborate on delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“Small culture in bigger teams” •“Good working relationships across other teams and agencies. ‘One’ meetings working well.” •“Outward looking and partnership working – integration, expertise of other partners” •“Holistic approach” •“Community relationships and new PCNS” •“Focus on customer care rather than just figures and performance stats” •“Officers and Members working well together” •“Bringing multiple perspectives into integration of systems” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Collaboration / working across teams and partners / collective / inclusive / connected / networking / joint working [5] •Partners / external agencies / customers / community relationships (e.g. people we work with) [8] <p>Members / political direction</p>

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Headline themes – primary focus of action with reference and headline title (A to C), what staff want and don’t want to see in new organisation and highest ranked linked theme with rank in square brackets (e.g. [\[1\]](#) indicating the highest mentioned theme).

Links to other data sources

Carers - [Carers - Somerset Intelligence - The home of information and insight on and for Somerset - Run by a partnership of public sector organisations](#)

Rurality - [Somerset: Facts & Figures - Somerset Intelligence - The home of information and insight on and for Somerset - Run by a partnership of public sector organisations](#)

Appendix C - Ways of Working Team Charter

Team:	
What is our team purpose?	Where, when and how we work (<i>balancing everything discussed by the team with organisational and operational needs</i>) e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will work fully remotely and catch up f2f once a month• We will be fully flexible hours between 7am and 7pm• We will have some meetings where we turn cameras off
What will we change? e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will have a no-meeting afternoon every week• We will look to reduce the number of meetings we have	How we support everyone in the team to work in the most productive way for them and remain fully inclusive e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are mindful that we all work differently and will support the need for a mix of remote and f2f interactions• We will support each other to take regular breaks away from the screen