



Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham - Executive Director - Resources

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date:	15 November 2021
Subject:	Smarter Working Policy

Summary:

The Audit Committee requested the presence of senior leaders who have been instrumental in the implementation of the Smarter Working Policy and any associated actions. The purpose of the paper is therefore to provide the current position with respect to the project and be present for any questions from Audit Committee members.

Recommendation(s):

To receive and note the contents of the report.

Background

The Council's Executive agreed to support the implementation of smarter working (SW) in 2020 and the project is based on the following objectives:

- performance management objectives focus on results and outcomes rather than presence at the work base
- maximising the use of office space across Lincolnshire
- managing the risks to our environment from climate change by reducing travel to work and meetings
- flexible employment terms to aid attraction and retention
- to improve connectivity and technology to improve business processes and reduce waste

Following extensive engagement and consultation with leaders, employees and trade unions, the Council's smarter working policy was formally launched in September 2021:

[Smarter Working Policy launches \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

The policy provides changes to employees' ways of working, enabling choice and flexibility, whilst retaining existing contractual terms, such as, work bases. There are expectations relating to behaviours and personal responsibility, as well as a clear

distinction of the types of working environment that will be available, namely, service hubs, managed and leadership workspace at Newland Campus. Not all employees are working in a hybrid way (home/work), and some are still required to work and attend on their contractual days/shifts.

The project is though multi-faceted and still in transition. Lancaster House (Intermin Service Hubs and Managed Workspace) and parts of County Offices (Leadership Hub) are now open and political decisions need to be made by the Executive on refurbishment for some buildings. Work is also on-going with locality bases, involving services, as well as IMT equipment and what financial savings can be made.

The SW policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure individuals are not being disadvantaged on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics.

Employees and their trade union representatives have been consulted in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. The Council’s trade unions whilst not objecting to the implementation of the SW policy, have registered a dispute on what they see as failings by the authority to formally negotiate changes to terms and conditions. The dispute is proceeding to its final stage with elected members in November 2021.

Conclusion

The SW project is still evolving and the financial outcomes still to be determined. We know however that the project will bring financial benefits, namely, business mileage, external room hire, property sales, reduction in car hire etc. There is also no evidence from reporting that individuals working from home or working in a hybrid way are not performing. The Council’s appraisal policy has though introduced monthly one to ones as a mechanism for improved performance management.

Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Smarter Working Policy (available at https://lincolnshirecc.sharepoint.com/SitePages/Smarter-Working-Policy-launches.aspx)

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