

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18th January 2021

Supporting Staff over the COVID Pandemic Period

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

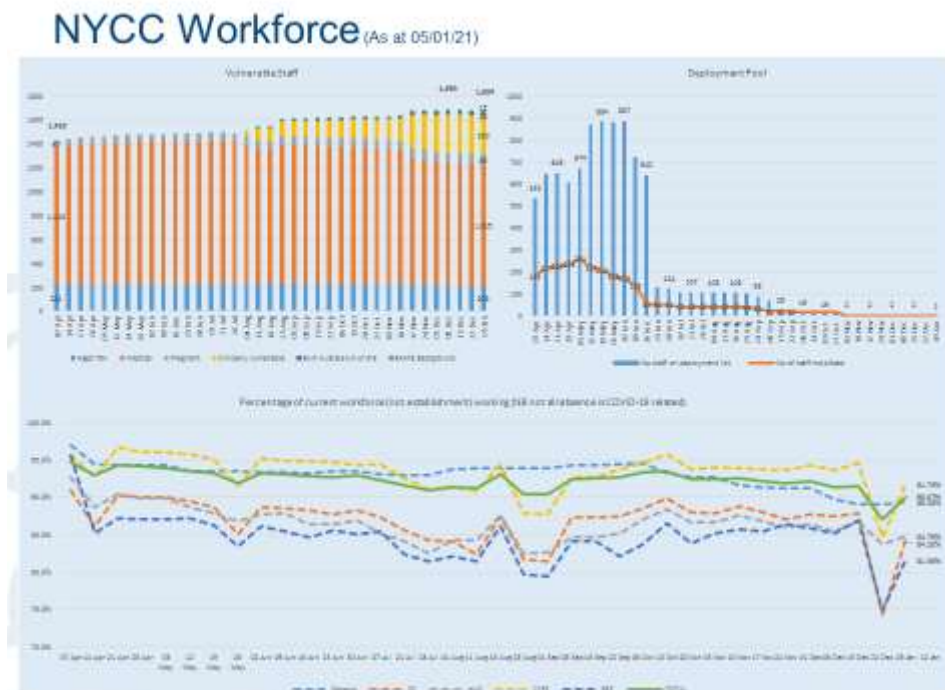
1.1 This report outlines the way in which the county council's workforce changed in response to Covid, and details the support provided to the workforce to enable them to do this and remain operationally effective and personally resilient throughout the epidemic

2.0 WORKFORCE STATUS

2.1 Covid19 impact on the workforce

There has inevitably been an impact on the workforce with number of staff cases rising and falling in line with national and local rates. The impact of a confirmed case can be challenging particularly for small or frontline teams. The proportion of staff working has been around 90–93% with a low in late October of 89% due to increased infections, the impact of test and trace and employees taking leave in October half term. Covid absence includes factors such as positive test results, symptoms, the requirement to self-isolate due to contact and quarantine prior to/after planned hospital admission.

As of first week of January 90.07% of the available workforce were working which includes annual leave and other non covid absences. A further 4.14% on furlough. Nearly 1,700 staff members are categorised as being vulnerable including around 100 who are categorised as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable. There are some 200 reported staff cases of Covid, with around 900 COVID test results detailed by staff in MyView of which over 100 have tested positive.



2.2 Furlough of Traded Services Staff

At the peak, nearly 700 employees in traded services, where income which funded the posts ceased or significantly reduced, were on furlough, with 460 currently fully or partly furloughed. Furlough continues to cover 80% of the wage costs and the service continued to pay the remaining 20%.

3.0 PROTECTING THE WORKFORCE

3.1 Identification of Staff for Covid-19 Testing

Testing for Covid saw steady staff numbers referred through a central team, originally focussed on Critical Key Workers it expanded to cover the full workforce and family members. Due to reducing referral numbers and the national referral route operating more efficiently, the employer-led referral route ceased in late August. However, to ensure the national employer route remained accessible and available for any urgent issues, NYCC maintained its registration with the national employer portal in case needed. Staff are required to record their testing results via MyView. As of 4th January of those staff who updated MyView, 86.5% had recorded a negative test result.

3.2 Providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Coronavirus pandemic inevitably resulted in a significant surge in demand for PPE to protect staff against risk of infection. The surge in worldwide demand initially created significant supply chain disruption and price instability. The Council had to operate in this context when looking to source PPE, and it soon became clear contracted suppliers were unable to meet demand.

In the first weeks of the crisis, with the failure of contracted suppliers, the Council began spot purchasing stock from any supplier with available stock. In effect, the Council set up a PPE sourcing, stock management and distribution system from scratch in a matter of weeks, and to date has spent some £5m on various items of PPE. This was done at pace and without any stock management software that would usually be required to manage the volume and complexity of the stock and distribution process. The spend has been split across local & national suppliers with 28% of spend going to local suppliers.

The collaborative approach and effort put in should not be underestimated. On a weekly basis over 47,000 facemasks, 38,000 aprons, 61,000 pairs of gloves and various other items are distributed to services across the council who have requirements for PPE. A video has been provided which illustrates the vast amount of PPE packed and distributed on a regular basis and delivered to service buildings across the county.

PPE is now accessed free of charge through a national portal for most frontline services and this arrangement has been in place since the autumn.

3.3 Homeworking Risk Assessments and Vulnerable Worker Risk Assessments

As it became clear that the government guidance for all employees to work from home if possible would extend from weeks to months, a comprehensive home working risk assessment process was developed to ensure any necessary adaptations were identified so all staff could work safely. These have been completed by some 2,300 employees and as a result some employees returned to an office space where homeworking could not be sustained for practical or health reasons.

On an average weekday 3,000 staff use their laptops and tablets to work remotely. As staff have been working from home on a daily basis this has meant meetings that would usually take place face to face have become virtual. Skype has enabled staff to work more efficiently with virtual meetings, video conferences and audio calls. See Appendix 1 for details.

Employees who cannot continue to work from home safely have been brought back to a workspace and the management protocol document has been updated to allow employees to return within agreed specific criteria i.e. health, role requirements, personal issues.

The government requirement for the extremely clinically vulnerable (CEV) to remain at home has varied depending on tier and lockdown and when needed CEV staff are allocated work they can undertake from home. Where staff's role and/or duties cannot be done from home, individual risk assessments have considered how work and the workplace can be adapted to allow a safe return or redeployment where this was not possible.

A full individual risk assessment for any employee with 1 or more vulnerabilities e.g. health, pregnancy, BAME, has taken place to ensure staff can work safely in the workplace, and covers making changes to the job and or the workplace, or redeployment to a lower risk work area. Prior to the new lockdown, the number of staff unable to undertake their role due to vulnerability to Covid had reduced to 13 with all successfully redeployed into other roles/duties.

Over 2,600 homeworking risk assessments have been completed to ensure homeworking arrangements meet legal health and safety requirements with equipment and technology provided to enable staff to work safely and efficiently at home. Employers have the same legal responsibilities for health and safety when the workplace is home as for work buildings.

Government guidance to work from home where possible is followed. For frontline staff this is not possible and they and other staff have, following individual risk assessments, continued work in a Covid secure workplace or way outside the home. Where needed staff have had risk assessments undertaken to ensure they are able to return to the workplace and nearly 3,000 staff have completed the Covid safe workplace induction enabling them to return to a work base in whole or part. These inductions are required for staff to attend work bases on an occasional basis for example for team meetings and face-to-face meetings with their manager. Given the new lockdown managers and staff have been asked to only hold face-to-face meetings where absolutely necessary and instead have online meetings, and the larger meeting rooms have been closed.

4.0 THE CHANGING WORKFORCE

The Council's workforce changed massively and rapidly, requiring recruitment of new staff, staff to move roles, take on new duties, work different hours, in different locations and in different ways, some of which happened overnight. Below are examples:

4.1 Recruitment and Resourcing Activity. The following has been undertaken:

- **HAS Care and Support Emergency Covid Workforce:** Almost 400 new starters recruited to more than 6,000 hours, with over 4,000 hours filled to date and the rest ongoing. This a combination of permanent recruitment to vacancies as well as increased need due to Covid and winter pressures. A recruitment campaign has received 541 applications to date.

- **Provider Recruitment:** The Recruitment team is currently working with 49 care providers and recruiting to 66 vacancies. The latest campaign reached 150,000 people, resulting in 464 applicants. Including applicants from previous campaigns, 588 applicants are being progressed with providers so far with 290 interviews and 126 new starters.
- **Emergency Resourcing Support to Care Homes:** 4 care homes are being supported with emergency staffing with seconded council care staff and agency workers sourced, in addition to permanent recruitment.
- **Young People's Employment:** initiatives are progressing in particular Kickstart with 30 NYCC placements approved and with Job Centre Plus who refer eligible young people for these placements. A further two applications as a Gateway intermediary for 46 partner employers have been submitted to DWP covering 112 placements immediately and 208 placements over the course of the scheme. A further application is being progressed as at least a further 12 organisations wish to offer additional placements.
- **TeamNY Volunteers:** Using existing NYCC volunteers (Ready for Anything, Rotters, Countryside etc.) a new TeamNY Volunteers scheme has been set-up to provide weekend support if Community Support Organisations do not have capacity for activities such as emergency shopping, prescription collection or pet care. Currently 104 volunteers are available against relatively low demand to date but this may change and if needed the request will be extended to council staff and/or recruit additional volunteers.

4.2 Deployment into Different Areas and Roles

Going into lockdown in late March, the Training and Learning service (T&L) took on the role of coordinating the deployment of underutilised and available council staff in some services to meet increased resource needs elsewhere. Initially available staff identified by Heads of Service completed a skills survey to assess their transferable skills and were a resource pool for T&L to approach when resource and work requests from services came in. At the height of this work in late May nearly 900 staff were on the deployment list with many deployed into other areas of work, some more than once. At various points during the pandemic there was a need for and use of deployed staff as detailed below:

Customer Resolution Centre: a team of 95 staff to support the increased workload of the contact centre including to make outbound calls to residents identified as shielding to ensure they were coping or to see if they needed any support.

Support for shielding residents:

- **Scheduling** – a logistical team of 42 to deal with the scheduling and planning of deliveries.
- **Rostering** – team of 9 to deal with the rostering of drivers.
- **Picking and packing** – a team of 5 working out of Leeming Bar highways depot picking and packing parcels of food and PPE as required.
- **Drivers** – a pool of 85 available for a range of driving duties cross North Yorkshire including delivery of PPE to services and others, and medical supplies and food to vulnerable residents.

Problem Solving team: a team of 22 to support the geographically based Community hubs. Examples of work: paying volunteers without cash, pensions from post office, utilities pre-payment including support and contact numbers for suppliers.

Community Hubs: 42 to support the work of the 23 geographically based hubs providing virtual and physical support as required.

Registration Service: 6 to run a mini 'contact centre' to support registration of deaths if required.

Universal+ NYCC Auxiliary Teams: 100 staff volunteers to support with community based help where required. Volunteers covered a range of needs across the community hub areas over the bank holidays and weekends and this was extended to support weekday work too where a further 48 staff volunteers were recruited. The support included prescription collection, food collection, companionship calls, dog walking and befriending. In addition, 3 co-ordinators were mobilised to support the free Yorkshire Post newspaper delivery project incorporating a welfare check.

Staff Advice Line: 4 to take calls, emails and triage appropriate support for any staff struggling to cope with various areas of work and life.

Resourcing Solutions: 16 to provide help with additional work recruiting for care and support.

Care Home Action team: 9 to provide support for sector care providers each with a case load of providers ensuring they had the support and resources they needed. This involved regular contact, going through checklists with provider managers.

Emergencies and Resilience team / Local Resilience Forum (LRF): 2 to support the work specifically in the coordination of PPE to care homes and the testing sites.

Property Services: - 5 to support delivering physical inductions to staff into Covid secure properties to ensure staff were safe in returning to work.

Staffing Emergency Covid teams: 7 for the Covid outbreak management Hub and 7 for COVID support Hub to provide ongoing vital support to the Covid response.

As lockdown started to ease from June, many staff returned to services as normal duties resumed. By late June the deployment pool reduced to 124 staff and by end of August it dropped to 103, with 40 staff remaining deployed. Currently with the exception of 16 staff who remain on deployed until the end of March 2021 to the Emergencies and Resilience team / LRF work and the Covid emergency teams, all returned back into services to their normal duties. The Resourcing Solutions team continue to address redeployment needs which focuses on staff who cannot undertake their usual role due to the risk to them of Covid. To date there are 6 staff temporarily redeployed and a further 7 referred for alternative roles to be found. This will increase further where clinically vulnerable staff are unable to work outside their home due to the further lockdown and if services again reduce provision due to the further national lock down.

In addition there were also many changes in services necessitating staff to work differently in terms of duties, hours and/or location resulting in hundreds of staff undertaking different duties and work and working different hours particularly being on call, on standby, and working weekends and evenings. Notably in HAS 300 staff moved

to different working patterns, including working extended hours during the week and at weekends in order to facilitate rapid discharge from hospital.

5.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS CHANGES AND SUPPORT

5.1 At the outset of the pandemic, new protocols were agreed with Unison, building on an already strong working relationship, to enable the necessary swift changes. A memorandum of understanding was agreed to deliver temporary changes to working arrangements. This included arrangements for the deployment of employees who could no longer do their normal work on the basis of no financial detriment, and that any necessary training be provided. In HAS it was agreed to move to 7 day working, 8am to 8pm.

Temporary changes to terms and conditions were agreed including changes to leave arrangements to allow more untaken leave to be carried over in the next 2 leave years and extensions to the flexitime scheme. At the same time employees and managers have been repeatedly encouraged to continue to book and take leave, even when normal holiday plans are not possible, to enable employees the opportunity to rest and refresh. Weekend working and standby payments were extended to all employees working such patterns as part of the Covid response.

5.2 Meetings with Unison take place at least fortnightly to ensure any concerns due to the rapidly changing landscape are resolved swiftly. The pandemic has raised a number of various workforce issues which have been addressed collaboratively, such as the response to the government call to return to work for the clinically extremely vulnerable, and the approach in place for vaccination of employees.

As the requirement to continue to work from home continued into the winter months, examples began to emerge of the financial detriment due to the need to heat the home rather than attend a workplace. In response a winter heating support scheme was introduced for those employees (below senior manager grades) who are incurring costs on winter heating above any savings from no longer needing to commute to a workplace (calculated as a round trip of 8 miles or more). The winter heating support payment has been set at the HMRC tax free sum (£26/month) is available in two payments across the winter months, pro rata to the number of days working at home. Staff are asked to only claim if there is a need caused by homeworking ie they would not be otherwise heating their house, and no offset commute savings, and to date some 300 staff have submitted claims.

5.3 In recognition that financial worries impact on overall wellbeing, employees have been able to access finance and debt support to help address, if needed, any money matters as a voluntary benefit provider via Salary Finance. This gives access to articles, calculators and tools relevant to employees' personal financial situation as well as support on budgeting challenges. It also gives a fairer option to borrow money or consolidate any existing debt, with access to affordable loans which can be repaid directly from salary.

6.0 TRAINING AND LEARNING SUPPORT FOR THE WORKFORCE

6.1 Going into lockdown, classroom face to face training was cancelled with immediate effect. Where training was service critical or required in response to Covid and staffs changed or new duties, T&L moved to "webinars", a live virtual classroom delivered

online involving the development of new content and the conversion of many classroom courses into webinars. T&L developed online Covid response related learning packages for internal and external workforces to access. The majority of “business as usual training” was converted to webinars with only a small amount of training that must be delivered face to face continuing in the classroom (i.e. first aid training). For these a risk assessment has been completed ensuring premises and training delivery is Covid secure at all times.

A review of the training to remain as webinars and that to be classroom based is now complete, with the new model for training post Covid being a much more blended approach with webinars having a greater presence, and a return to the classroom only for the most appropriate learning experience. Information and knowledge elements will, in the future, be taught mainly via webinar, with skills practice and induction programmes returning to the classroom.

6.2 Details of training to support the workforce response to, and during, Covid.

Webinars to support Health and Adult Social Care workforce

- Skills for Care Induction to new starters
- Catheter Care webinars for carers taking on some healthcare tasks to support health workers
- End of Life and Supporting Dying Alone webinars (Covid-19 specific)
- Skills for Care Supporting the person
- Safeguarding Raising a Concern Champions
- Safeguarding Concerns Manager training
- Safeguarding Level 3 Enquiry Officer and Safeguarding Level 4 Coordinator training
- Basic Medication Refresher training
- Moving and Handling/First Aid
- Supporting families and Staff through End Of Life for Managers and Team Leaders
- Appropriate Adult Training
- Strength based Support Planning for provider Services
- Supporting Individuals in Decision Making under the Mental Capacity Act
- Section 117 (Mental Capacity Act) Workshops
- Administering Controlled Drugs and supporting Health Colleagues for registered managers.
- Infection Prevention and Control to internal settings and wider sector care homes.

As part of the Care Home Action Plan the above offer was made available to external care providers where relevant.

At the beginning of the pandemic, T&L delivered a number of webinars to external care providers on the donning and doffing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to support the local CCG with the rollout of how to wear and remove all types of PPE safely. These webinars were replaced by an online package open to a range of health and social care workforces across the county and updated regularly in line with Public Health England guidance. To date over 9,000 care staff have accessed this, nearly 3,000 NYCC staff and over 6,000 staff from external organisations.

Webinars to support Children and Young Peoples workforce

- Administration of Medication Refresher
- Basic First Aid and Manual Handling Covid-19
- Moving and Handling
- Training for foster carers including; Impact of abuse and neglect on the developing child, Secure base 1 and 2, Safer caring and managing allegations, Managing challenging behaviour, Understanding identity and contact and Basic life support
- Team Teach for new starters

7.0 SUPPORTING MANAGERS

Managers had to suddenly, and for a prolonged period, manage their staff differently with many working from home or remotely, others working in differently or changed roles with new duties and remits, working different hours and patterns. It was, and remains, important that managers are supported to do this well, and the following support is available:

7.1 Online training modules and webinars as below on;

- Leading people through change
- Values based leadership
- Managing remote or virtual teams
- Understanding your team
- Managing Performance remotely
- Having a difficult conversation
- Coaching – the power of questions, bite size ‘watch and go’ video

7.2 HR Shared Service team

The HR Team made some rapid responsive changes to ensure continued and good support of managers. There was a 160% increase in enquiries at the start and within two weeks all Managers Skills Workshops were changed to run online via webinar rather than classroom based. Since then all scheduled manager skills support have been delivered online with positive feedback on this new approach. The team have handled over 600 Covid related enquiries to date and continue to support managers with advice on a range of Covid issues such as facilitating a return to work for vulnerable staff.

7.3 Managers Framework

In response to feedback from the Pulse Survey and Covid increasing the need to work differently, a ‘new ways of working framework’ for managers was issued providing recommendations on practical approaches to new ways of working with all staff, starters and leavers in the immediate and medium term. Discussion of this took place in the AD Shared Conversations below.

7.4 AD Shared Conversations 2020

Between 5th-21st October, there were 11 virtual sessions with over 300 managers participating in conversations about managing teams under the ‘new ways of working’ caused by Covid. Engagement with managers continues via the *Managers Discussion Group* on Yammer.

7.5 **Senior Managers Seminars**

Virtual sessions took place in July and November. Management Board and senior managers shared their experiences and considered issues and priorities. A particular focus was the changed ways of working and the impact on the workforce. November's seminar focussed on Covid-19 updates and continued the conversation on the new working arrangements and staff resilience.

7.6 **CEX Assistant Directors Extended Leadership Group**

Virtual sessions between Management Board and all ADs took place in April, July and October with a focus on Covid-19 issues including staffing, and staff support and welfare.

8.0 **SUPPORTING STAFF**

The Council's workforce has had to work very differently, be hugely flexible and responsive, change duties, hours, work patterns and locations and personally be very resilient. A wide range of support has been available to all staff to support this as follows;

8.1 **Training and Learning**

- Resilience webinar - Uptake of these webinars by staff has proved very popular with over 300 staff attending more than 24 events and over 200 staff booked onto future sessions.
- Talking about mental health webinar
- Mental Health Awareness online package
- 4 'bite-size' online developments to support staff in dealing with bereavement and "going home" – dealing with the effects of going home after a very difficult/traumatic day at work.
- An online package for Covid building inductions replaced the face-to-face inductions. In addition to over 1,400 staff inducted face-to-face, nearly 3,000 have completed the package.
- An online package to support managers and staff to undertake risk assessments for shielding staff returning to work in buildings.
- First Responders online package made available to all staff.
- The Public Health England online package "Psychological First Aid" is available for all front line staff to support working with people in distress and specifically written in the context of Covid.

8.2 **#AskSAL**

A newly created staff advice line put in place from April 2020 to offer an additional line of support to employees providing practical advice and support to help with any life challenges or questions that Covid presents, not necessarily work related. Employees contact #AskSAL via a dedicated phone number or email address with a response provided in 24 hours during working hours. To date there has been nearly 200 queries with the most prominent topic being Health and Wellbeing.

8.3 **Yammer**

As part of the roll out of Office 365, several Yammer groups have been set up as it lends itself to better social interaction online. These include social groups e.g. knit and natter, gardens, bikes, recycling, running as well as groups based on Directorates and service teams to provide staff the opportunity to catch up when they cannot see each other face

to face. Groups such as 'Stronger Together', provide an opportunity for people to talk about current issues across the council.

8.4 **Support for new starters**

There is a concern for staff just starting with the county council that they will not have the opportunity to easily become part of their team and settle into their new role. Joining a new organisation can be an anxious time and the current situation has made this potentially more challenging. It is vital all new starters feel as welcome and settled in their new role as possible, even if they cannot physically meet their new team. A remote induction tips for new joiners is provided along with their conditional offer email, and managers are involved in new arrangements for welcoming new staff through remote inductions. To help with these new ways of working tips for managers and colleagues have been provided to help navigate some of the information, tools and support needed for new staff to get the most out of a remote induction.

8.5 **Health and Wellbeing**

Having resources available to support staff with their health and wellbeing and personal resilience are particularly important at this time and include:

- a) A wide range of tips, tools and techniques to maintain health and wellbeing on the '*Looking After You*' section of the intranet.
- b) The Employee Assistance Programme provided by Health Assured includes access to 24/7 counselling services for staff (and any member of their household). There is also a range of online diagnostic tools and self-help guides and plans on lifestyle issues such as mental health, healthy eating and exercise.
- c) The recently launched 'Taking Care of YOU Toolkit' is a useful tool to help prevent work related stress. It raises awareness and understanding of mental health, and includes straightforward strategies and coping mechanisms to help staff manage the challenges of their work and workplace (especially in the current circumstances) and the impact of these on mental health. The intranet page also provides a wealth of resources and activities such as:
 - A training hub to improve mental health and wellbeing
 - Tips to maintain boundaries between work and home during Covid
 - Top tips to help maintain mental and physical health

8.6 **Workplace Wellbeing**

- A Health and Wellbeing plan and supporting communications plan are in place and aligned to public health campaigns, as well as articles, links to online resources and blogs.
- Yammer support groups have been established for staff focussing on Working Parents, Home but Not Alone, Looking After You and Working Carers as well as a Menopause Support Group.
- An inclusion programme to promote equality and diversity, enabling staff to be supported and feel welcome by NYCC as an inclusive employer, started in the Autumn and includes:
 - Staff networks; A BAME group has been established and is considering the challenges faced by ethnic minority staff and drawing up actions to bring about change. A disability staff network is also being established with the hope that further networks will hopefully follow.

- Inclusion calendar of events; celebrating and raising awareness of individuality, through lived experiences.

This programme intends to increase understanding from colleagues and address any challenges faced to bring about change, and will continue to develop during 2021.

8.7 Regular Updates

It is important staff are, and feel, informed and have up to date information on an often rapidly changing position. The CEX sends a direct update by email to all staff weekly and the Assistant CEX (Business Support) sends a regular all staff email on Covid specific workforce issues and information. In addition, senior managers regularly hold regular large virtual meetings with their teams and all managers are required to regularly communicate with their team.

9.0 CHECKING WITH STAFF HOW THEY ARE

9.1 Staff Survey

A Voice Your Views staff survey took place in July focused on the theme of working through Covid, asking staff for their views on working differently though the pandemic. Results showed high satisfaction levels of those who participated at 84% and team and directorate results provided really helpful insight to how we have been working, demonstrating incredible contributions across the workforce. There were over 2,000 comments from staff on what they would like to keep or change in working differently, and these will help to shape the approach to new ways of working in the future. The results showed high levels of satisfaction with the support provided by both the council as the employer and managers specifically, with significant increases in the proportion of staff who feel they are kept informed and have the resources (technology and equipment) to work effectively, especially during the pandemic.

Staff are encouraged to contribute further by continuing this conversation, sharing ideas and thoughts on the recent changes to work all experienced, including through discussion groups on Yammer. See below for details. A full survey is planned for 2021 to continue seeking views from staff across the workforce.

Pulse survey: Working through Covid

You

I have received enough information during the Covid pandemic to do my role well

I know where to access health and wellbeing resources that might support me

I have been able to strike the right balance between my work and home life during the Covid pandemic period

Where I work, we have the resources (e.g. technology and equipment) I have needed to complete my work effectively during the Covid pandemic working arrangements

I have adapted well to different working arrangements

Your team / manager

My manager has done a good job of keeping me informed during the Covid pandemic

People within my team have supported each other during the Covid pandemic working arrangements

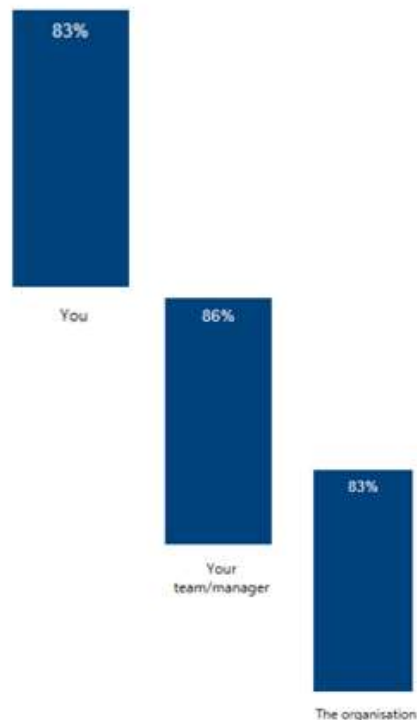
In my team we have been encouraged to identify new solutions for future working and service delivery

The organisation

Senior management has done a good job of keeping me informed about the County Council's response to the Covid pandemic

I would recommend the County Council as a great place to work

2020 NYCC satisfaction levels



You	2020	2019	↑↓
I have received enough information during the Covid pandemic to do my role well	88	75.67	↑ 13
I know where to access health and wellbeing resources that might support me	92		
I have been able to strike the right balance between my work and home life during the Covid pandemic period	67	70.92	↓ 4
Where I work, we have the resources (e.g. technology and equipment) I have needed to complete my work effectively during the Covid pandemic working arrangements	83	69.01	↑ 14
I have adapted well to different working arrangements	83		
Your team / manager			
My manager has done a good job of keeping me informed during the Covid pandemic	90		
People within my team have supported each other during the Covid pandemic working arrangements	92		
In my team we have been encouraged to identify new solutions for future working and service delivery	77		
The organisation			
Senior management has done a good job of keeping me informed about the County Council's response to the Covid pandemic	87	53.55	↑ 34
I would recommend the County Council as a great place to work	79	66.13	↑ 13

9.2 Current focus

With over 9 months working through Covid and now into winter with Covid levels rising and another lockdown, the focus is on supporting staff to continue to work differently and to maintain their personal resilience.

Staff and managers have access to expanded virtual support networks, including more informal groups on 'Yammer', there is a framework and resources to help managers to manage remotely including skills' webinars, staff are encouraged to take leave and have regular breaks, training to support resilience is available in addition to established employee support resources. Support resources have been developed for employees with additional needs, from those caring for children or other vulnerable loved ones, for those who already had mental health needs, and for those caring for those on the autistic spectrum for whom the changes have been particularly challenging.

The council's workforce, is representative of, and indeed is part of the local population with some 85% living in the county. As such, the workforce, like the wider population, has been changed, and significantly affected by covid. Some staff will have lost loved ones, some will have and may continue to be ill, others are themselves vulnerable, or are carers with a constant anxiety about those they care for, front line staff will have ongoing worries about catching and/or transmitting the virus, there will be financial worries for some where family finances have been adversely affected, and much more. As a supportive employer the information and practical support available is constantly being reviewed, amended and expanded in response to the changing situation and workforce needs.

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Home Working (Weekly update as at 16/12/20)



For the week commencing the 7th December:

Total: Weekday average **3618** Weekend average **686**



Skype Conferences (includes audio and video)

For the week commencing the 7th December:

During the week:
6646 skype conferences took place with 21,812 participants, resulting in a total of 244,818 conference minutes

On the weekend:
78 Skype conferences took place with 210 participants, resulting in a total of 1163 conference minutes

Total:
6724 Skype Conferences
22,022 Participants
245,981 Conference minutes



Skype Instant messages (IM)

For the week commencing the 7th December:

During the week:
227,182 Instant messages were sent during 49,501 instant messaging sessions.

On the weekend:
2764 Instant messages were sent during 516 instant messaging sessions.

Total:
229,946 Instant messages
50,017 IM sessions

Home Working (Weekly update as at 16/12/20)

Home Working:

The chart below shows the dramatic increase in employees (number of users), logging in to the NYCC systems from a location other than one of the corporate offices. For the week commencing the 7th December, an average of 2940 employees worked from home during the week and an average of 491 worked on the weekend. In addition to this, during the week, an average of 678 employees logged in using Citrix data, and an average of 195 on the weekend.

