

The Future of Work

*Optimising collaboration,
concentration and culture (3Cs)
in a post-covid-19 world*

Advisory Council meeting
23 February 2021

Mission

Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop recommendation on post-covid-19 working practices for Leadership approval<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Leverages learnings from covid-19 working practices▪ Optimises 3Cs (collaboration, concentration and culture)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Covers staff internal working practices only▪ Excludes<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Stakeholder engagement▪ Technical accounting issues
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Post-covid-19 restrictions have ceased (estimated 31 Aug 2021)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No need for social distancing – can leave home▪ Children have returned to school▪ Commuting hours and availability have returned to normal▪ Start with human considerations for the norm (not infrequent, unusual situations)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Then identify office, technology, training/culture, policy needs▪ May phase implementation process as technology modernisation initiative progresses▪ Most staff can periodically work ad hoc day at home, separate from this policy (ie, these alternatives relate to regular work from home)▪ Board / consultative group meetings require staff in office▪ Consider implications of Sustainability Standards Board, if any, at a later date

Process

- 1 Brainstorm observations, opportunities, challenges and alternatives
- 2 Narrow alternatives for further research
 - Human side first
 - Supporting elements – office, technology, training/culture, policy
- 3 Research (Feb – Mar)
 - Advisory Council
 - Trustees Human Capital Committee
 - Board member and staff survey
 - Board member and staff workshops
 - Outreach to other similar organisations
 - Review of expert research, thought pieces, articles
- 4 Finalise recommendation (May)
- 5 Seek approval from Leadership (June)
- 6 Preparation / implementation (from July)
- 7 Effective (ready by 1 September, but defer depending on covid situation)

A grayscale world map is the background for the slide. Overlaid on the map are several thick, light gray curved lines that sweep across the continents. Additionally, there are several dotted lines that form a grid-like pattern across the map, intersecting the curved lines.

Scene-setting

Pre-covid-19 situation

- All staff based in London, except:
 - Asia-Oceania office staff
 - 1 US-based staff
- Remote working policy - Permitted to work from home up to one day per week, if, subject to regular review by manager:
 - Able to work efficiently and reliably
 - Have established working relationships
 - Probationary period has ended
 - Able to come to the office if needed during normal hours
 - Contactable (Outlook updated, phones forwarded, etc)
 - Childcare covered
 - Health & safety requirements met

Situation - things have changed

- The experience of 2020 showed
 - The output of the organisation has continued
 - Its day-to-day running as well as its overall governance have continued
 - New people have continued to join (13% of our total staff have never seen the office)
- When working remotely expectations have changed
 - for almost everyone, as to what is achievable
 - for many people, as to what is desirable;
 - for many others, it has highlighted what they miss about the office
- Much of the debate to date has focused on the **individual**: the benefits (flexibility, better work/life balance, saving time and money on commuting, ability to concentrate) versus the downside (feeling isolated, tied to a screen, physical and mental health issues), with the benefits often being emphasised.
- The following slides therefore focus on what the **organisation** as a whole may be missing.

What is the organisation missing?

- What is the *organisation* missing that individuals may not always be conscious of?
 1. **Culture:** Events that build the culture of the organisation are hard to replicate remotely eg sharing food; eg a leaving-do or a celebration of an achievement feel less personal when virtual.
 2. **Communication & relationships:** When working remotely, communication has to be deliberate, you can't bump into someone; it is possible to build relationships where there is an 'excuse' to contact someone, eg in a team, but wider relationships or deeper rapport may not get established.
 - People could lose the wider context to their own work or connections with someone else's; they might not hear of opportunities to be involved; this can lead to 're-inventing wheels', sub-optimization of work, and missed development opportunities for individuals. This is especially the case for new hires, who will take longer to get up the learning curve and develop networks.
 - However, some teams have seen improved communication in the remote environment (more value now placed on sharing, creation of periodic coffees between randomly-selected staff, more staff sharing meetings).
 3. **Energy:** The office 'buzz' and activity can aid motivation, focus, productivity and collaboration – although staff do not necessarily need to be in the office for this and some find it difficult to concentrate in open plan.
 4. **Purpose:** A physical, tangible presence may provide a sense of purpose from being part of something bigger, although attendance at whole organisation meetings is often higher when virtual.

What is the organisation missing? cont.

5. **Effectiveness:** Some work activities are not so effective virtually at the moment:
- **Multiple interactions:** events that are largely one-way communications (eg conference) work more effectively than where there are multiple interactions
 - **Debate:** Although the effectiveness of some meetings is improved by being run virtually (eg people need to be more disciplined), there is a question whether debate in public meetings is as effective
 - **Connectivity:** Sometimes there are connectivity issues caused generally by bandwidth restrictions at individuals' homes, which is a distraction when it occurs in a public meeting
 - **Pilot error:** Occasionally there are pilot-error issues, though these are less frequent now (apart from forgetting to mute/un-mute...)
 - **Unknown:** how much our effectiveness in a virtual environment has relied on relationships having previously been well established by spending a lot of time together in the office – the experience of those who have joined entirely on a virtual basis may give an indication.
- IT platforms are becoming more widely available that facilitate small group interaction within a larger meeting, or that enable collaboration and brainstorming around a whiteboard; so some of these issues are improving, though an individual's domestic bandwidth problem may still be a driver for them to be in the office.

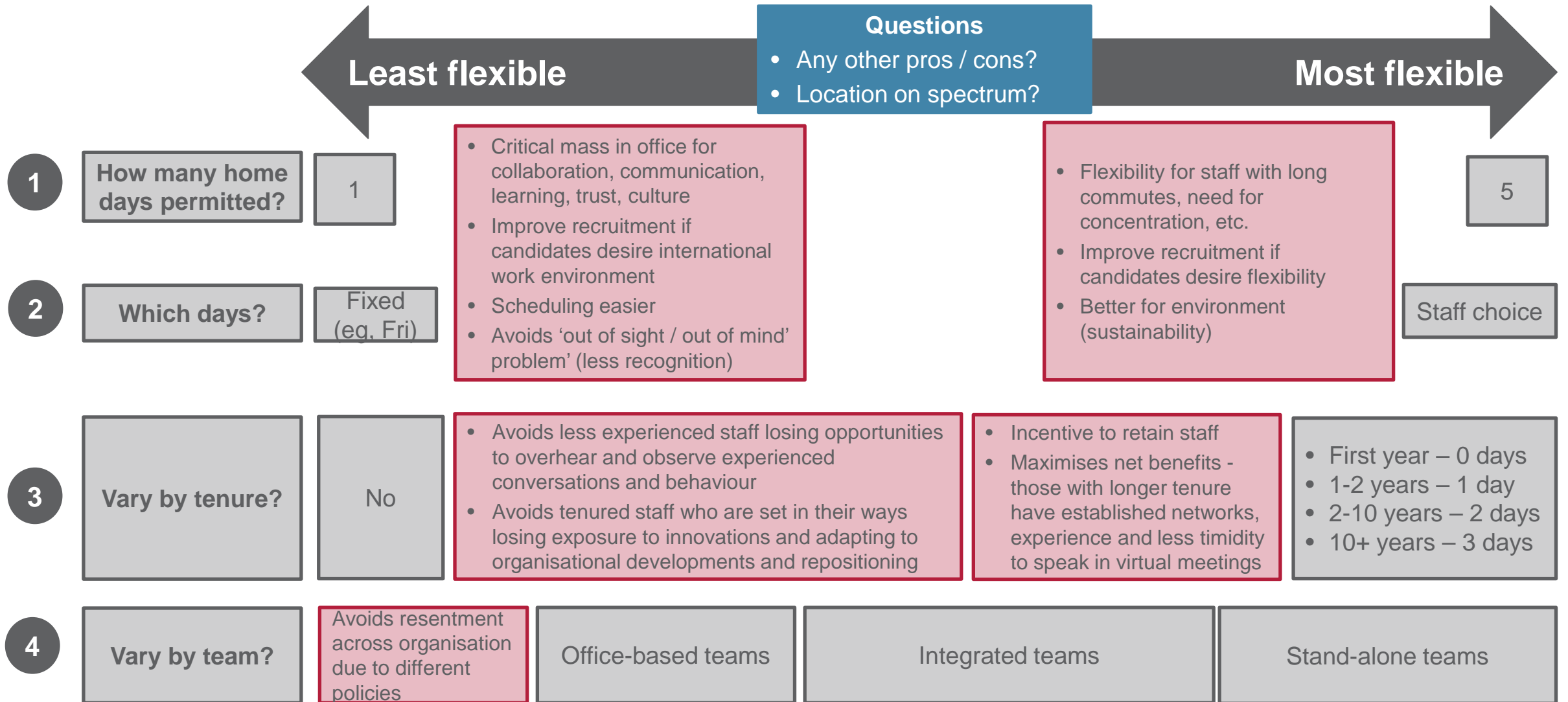
Other issues

- “Can people be trusted to do a good job when they can’t be seen?” The past year has demonstrated that they can
 - Most staff are highly conscientious and committed, so risk fatigue and burnout if they fail to set personal boundaries. Can managers identify and intervene as effectively in a remote environment?
- Hybrid work environments are different compared to everyone in the office or everyone working from home:
 - Ensure those working from home get a chance to speak and that meetings do not favour those in office
 - Ensure those at home are somehow involved in spontaneous office conversations, or communication and trust deteriorate
 - To get benefits of staff being in office, need a critical mass; otherwise, much like working remotely but in the office
 - We are an international organization, with different interaction / communication styles and different levels of confidence communicating in English
- Recruiting
 - We are in a global battle for talent. Path forward needs to be competitive with other organisations to facilitate recruitment of quality candidates
 - Part of our appeal is the international work environment, so also need critical mass in one place to provide that
- More work from home supports global sustainability efforts



Alternatives to research

Human – alternatives



Support

Types	Office	Technology	Training and culture change	Policy
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convert more permanent desks into 'hotelling' desks?• More meeting rooms• More sound-proof offices• Sufficient trained staff in office for health / safety (eg, fire marshals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stronger office internet and mobile phone coverage• Stronger home internet• Meeting rooms with TVs, cameras and simple use• Outlook calendars that show whereabouts without blocking time as busy• Tablets spaced in corridors and kitchen to pull remote workers into spontaneous / informal hallway conversations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairing hybrid meetings• Eliminating barriers to spontaneous TEAMS calls• Creating a culture of inclusivity with informal communications (ie, embedding habit of pulling in remote workers at the beginning of a spontaneous / informal hallway conversation)• More knowledge management tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core hours?• Acceptable level of performance• Health / safety / technology requirements met• Childcare covered• Whereabouts updated• Easily and immediately contactable• Cameras on• Able to fully engage – no 'let's wait until everyone is in the office'• Able to come to office if needed• Any organisational support for printing, couriering, office supplies, office equipment, WiFi, electricity?



Questions for the Advisory Council

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1 What alternatives and trends are you aware of, or seeing in your own organisations, on the future of work?

2 What are some pros / cons to these alternatives and trends? How can the pros be facilitated and the cons mitigated?

Timeframe

- 3
- What is the expected timeframe for implementation of changes (eg, immediately after covid-19 restrictions are lifted)?
 - Are changes occurring (or planned to occur) under a phased approach or a 'big bang' approach?
 - If a phased approach is being considered, what are the milestones and what needs to be demonstrated to move to the next phase?

4 What do you think the key considerations should be for us?



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