

Employee Communication from The Managing Director - COVID-19, No 50,

20 July 2021

I hope that this latest briefing finds you and your family well and once again, I must express my thanks for everything you have done to keep our vital public service operating, and supporting each other, during these long months of the pandemic.

I wanted to write specifically to my office-based colleagues following on from the First Minister's statement last week regarding the ongoing support for homeworking as all of Scotland moved into Level 0 from 19 July 2021.

COVID-19 Homeworking Policy

Homeworking, where possible, remains important and we continue to encourage and support this for our office-based employees who can work from home.

In a statement on 13 July 2021, the First Minister asked all employers to continue to support homeworking, where possible, until we move beyond level 0. We have recently drafted a Transitional Homeworking Policy which has been approved by the Corporate Leadership Team and is currently with our Trade Unions for consultation.

The Transitional Homeworking Policy reflects our position on homeworking through the next phase of recovery and towards our 'new normal'. These arrangements apply as we move out of the pandemic and beyond level 0; at least until 31 December 2021 or until such time that office accommodation requirements have been assessed and Government guidance supports a greater return to office working.

For now, I ask you to continue working from home, where possible. If you must attend the office, please adhere to the protective measures in place.

Health and Safety for Working at Home

The Health and Safety Executive advise that the risks associated with using DSE equipment for people working at home on a long-term basis must be controlled.

To control the risks associated with using DSE equipment and ensure Tayside Contracts meets its statutory obligations, employees will be required to complete a 'Homeworking Self Risk Assessment' annually.

Most of us therefore will be required to complete an updated risk assessment in August/September 2021 and so we will soon be asking employees to complete an updated risk assessment and submit this to their Line Manager for review and recording purposes.

'New Normal' – Hybrid Working

The success of homeworking during the COVID-19 pandemic provides us with an opportunity to 'build back better' by incorporating hybrid working as part of our normal working life. However, hybrid working beyond COVID will be different from homeworking during the pandemic.

Hybrid working (working remotely part-time) is a new approach and there is learning to be gained from all our colleagues participating in this prior to committing to a permanent move to hybrid working.

If you can work from home, even if you are not currently, your manager will arrange an informal review with you soon. During this review you and your manager will complete a survey about your desire for future homeworking/office working and the feasibility of this.

This survey will aid management to ascertain hybrid working requirements going forward including office accommodation requirements. Thereafter, I hope to be in a position to share more on our 'new normal' approach to hybrid working.

Employee Wellbeing

It is important that employees, and their managers, take steps to ensure good employee wellbeing whilst working from home by establishing and maintaining regular meetings and routines, taking appropriate breaks and talking through any concerns or issues an employee may have about working from home.

Looking after your mental and physical wellbeing is really important, especially so during the COVID-19 pandemic and while things are continually changing. Key areas to focus on are mental and physical wellbeing, eating well and staying hydrated, sleeping well and seeking appropriate support for you and those you care for.

Guidance on improving and maintaining your wellbeing, whilst at home and at work, as well as further mental health and wellbeing resources can be accessed through our Mental Health and Wellbeing Resource Contact list, which can be found here:

<https://www.tayside-contracts.co.uk/covid-19/wellbeing>

Should you have any questions about any of the topics covered in this briefing please speak to your line manager.

Please continue to refer to Tayside Contracts' website www.tayside-contracts.co.uk on a regular basis.

If you have not already done so and wish to provide your email address to us in order to benefit from electronic access to communications such as these, please forward your email address to communications@tayside-contracts.co.uk We will not forward your email address onto any third parties or use it for any other purpose other than to communicate with you.

Thank you so much for all you are doing to protect and support yourself, your families and your communities during these difficult times.

Keith McNamara, Managing Director, 20 July 2021

