

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

22 January 2021



**Workplace Transformation: Enabling
Smarter Working**

Report of Corporate Management Team

Paul Darby, Interim Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present to Members an overview and update on workplace transformation and the enablement of smarter worker approaches.

Executive Summary

- 2 This report and supporting presentation provides Members with an overview of workplace transformation and smarter working activity, the impact, response and learning from the COVID-19 pandemic and future plans to develop our workplace model.

Recommendation

- 3 Members are recommended to note the information in the report and supporting presentation.

Background

- 4 There has never been a more important time to meet changing expectations through the enhancement and expansion of our workplace transformation and smarter working approach.
- 5 Against the backdrop of COVID-19, workforce and digital readiness is crisis readiness. The core themes and principles of our workplace and digital strategies, in addition to a strong technological infrastructure and broadband offer has enabled us to connect people with services, support our customers, our communities and our organisation to deliver better outcomes for the people of County Durham.
- 6 COVID-19 created an unprecedented situation in which we were forced to rapidly develop emergency working practices to maintain service delivery. This has brought much change and many opportunities and together we have proven beyond reasonable doubt that for many of us, work is very much an activity and not a location.
- 7 Technology, workforce development and HR policies are just some of the elements that have enabled us all to continue to work. Without the resilience, resourcefulness and passion of staff, services would have struggled to deliver what our residents need.
- 8 The last nine months has provided a wealth of experience to guide future work design, with thousands of workers adapting to new technologies and developing new working practices.
- 9 Careful consideration of the benefits and challenges experienced will support evidence-based decision making and underpin new working practices which mitigate and control risks to work and wellbeing, as well as capitalising on the benefits.
- 10 This report and supporting presentation provides Members with an overview of workplace transformation and smarter working activity, the impact, response and learning from the COVID-19 pandemic and future plans to develop our workplace model.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- HR policies and guidance
- Digital strategy
- Transformation strategy plan

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Not applicable

Consultation

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Complaints regarding any equality and diversity aspect are handled in consultation with the Council's Equality Team.

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Staffing

None

Accommodation

None

Risk

None

Procurement

None