Contents

Agile Working

Introduction

Becoming a more agile workforce and working smarter is at the heart of Tomorrow's NES. We use the term Agile Working to refer to the new ways of working made possible by the implementation of our Property & Workplace Strategy, advances in technology, implementation of our Organisational Development Plan and a wide range of flexible working options.

NES is committed to taking a comprehensive, strategic but practical approach to realising the benefits of an Agile Workforce. This approach applies across all of our office locations. As we roll out our Property Strategy, we will take advantage of contemporary facilities to create new working environments that enhance collaborative and team based working and support the development of a more integrated organisation.

This Agile Working Guide sets out what we mean and what we want to achieve in becoming a more agile organisation and the tools available to help us with the change process.

"NES is committed to taking a comprehensive, strategic but practical approach to realising the benefits of an Agile Workforce."

What We Want to Achieve

We are looking carefully at our current ways of working and challenging ourselves on what we do and how we do it. This is happening in a number of ways: through new Operational Planning processes, Activity Based Costing and Lean and new approaches to individual performance management. Becoming more flexible and agile in the way we work is core to delivering the NES Vision and our 2011-2014 Strategic Framework. Our objectives are:

• increasing the effectiveness of our activities

• reducing the financial costs of running the organisation

• maximising the use of our office space and reducing our environmental footprint

• focusing our work on outcomes rather than processes

• creating office environments that facilitate collaboration, innovation and a more integrated organisation

We want to make it easier to work across different office locations and to enable, for example, working in virtual teams which supports new ways of working, organisational change and enables us to control our travel and accommodation costs.

We do recognise that there are constraints which will impact on the pace of change we are able to implement. These include participation in national systems development, where we may need to work to national priorities and timescales; the budget available to us to invest e.g. in new technology; and our capacity to maximise quickly the use of new technology such as the Enterprise Content Management system and to realise the benefits of our investment in e.g. Activity Based Costing and Lean.
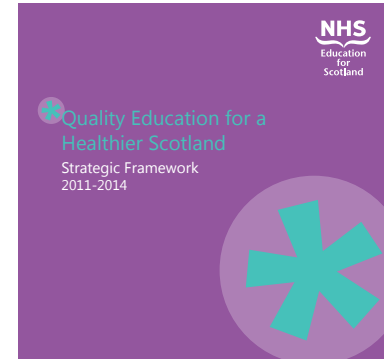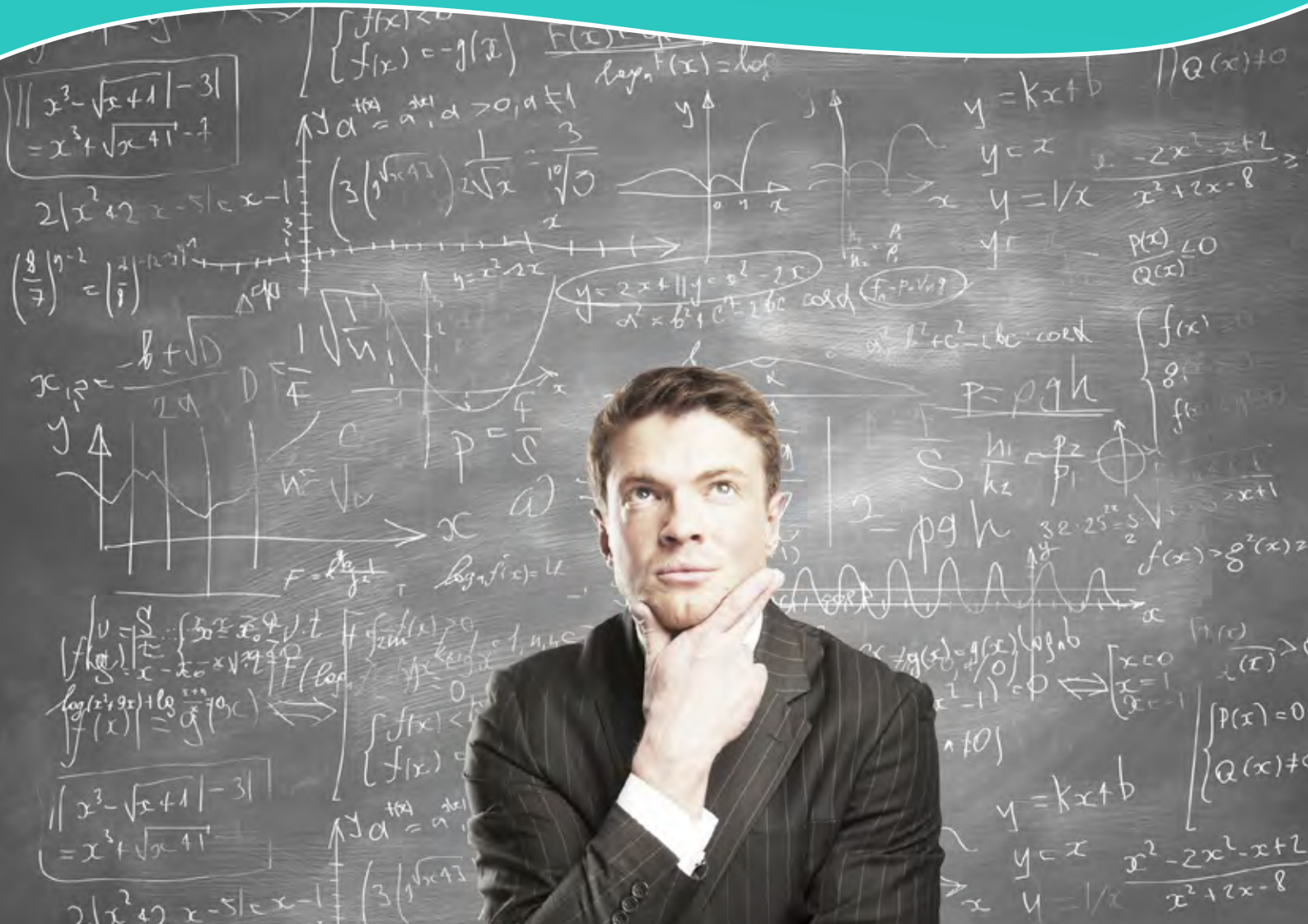
NHS
Education
for
Scotland

Quality Education for a Healthier Scotland
Strategic Framework
2011-2014

"Becoming more flexible and agile in the way we work is core to delivering the NES Vision and our 2011-2014 Strategic Framework"

6

We are however committed to the journey and to making continuous improvements and progress towards achieving these benefits outlined earlier. Through our Organisational Development Plan we are equally committed to supporting staff with their learning and development needs and developing our managers and leaders to support us all in become a more agile and flexible workforce.

Agile Working Explained

Agile Working involves developing the organisation, our culture and ways of working. It is not about doing things in the old way with some new technologies and redesigned offices – it is about new ways of working using new tools, new processes, and in some instances, new approaches to management and teamwork. This requires different types of behaviours and different expectations about how work is done.

An Agile Working culture consists of:

- higher levels of collaborative working – between individuals, between teams and with external partners.
- the pursuit of continuous service improvements, in particular through the use of new technologies to increase efficiencies
- a commitment to flexibility – being constantly open to new ways of working and delivering services.
- an emphasis on working in shared spaces and with shared resources
- a commitment to using new technologies and new ways of working to reduce the environmental impact of work styles, processes and delivery of services
- a culture of learning using the new technologies to help staff wherever they are located, to develop their skills and capabilities
- space being allocated to activities, not to individuals and not on the basis of seniority
- reducing the costs of doing work and our impact on the environment

"Agile Working involves developing the organisation, our culture and ways of working."

- an underpinning of our equality and diversity principles through our commitment to flexible approaches to working patterns and meeting where possible individual needs

- meeting our health and safety obligations with regard to legal and other requirements through innovative, practical and proportional solutions

Agile working is about ways of working and the space, technology and protocols are tools that help us to work in that way. We are committed to a robust process of engaging with staff and working in partnership through the process of making changes to workplaces, technologies and processes.

New Environments for New Ways of Working

Agile working aims to creative attractive and high quality work environments that support new work styles and increase the adaptability of space. We know from our analysis that, across the whole of the NES estate, we currently occupy far more space per member of staff than expected norms. We also know from the audits of the use of space in our offices that space was significantly underused.

To address this we have developed a Workplace Strategy, which applies to all NES locations, will significantly improve our efficiency in the use of space and enable the new ways of working that we aspire to. With the move to a new building in Edinburgh (Westport 102) we have the opportunity to implement the new Workplace Strategy; however it is our intention to roll this out across the whole of NES as we seek to re-model our existing space, or when opportunities come up to reconsider our lease commitments.

The space is designed to be open and informal in style which gives us greater opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing. We have an increased range and choice of places to work and meet with a balance of enclosed and open spaces encouraging and supporting new ways for us to work together.

We have designed the workspace to provide:

- flexible meeting spaces – small meeting rooms, large meeting and training rooms and open meeting areas
- space for quiet and concentrated working
- spaces for confidential work and phone calls
- resource areas e.g. print/photocopying facilities
- flexible multipurpose spaces
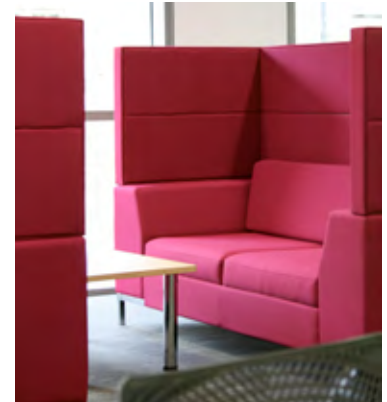
"Agile working aims to creative attractive and high quality work environments"

12

As we adapt to life in the new working environment, it will be important that we regularly review arrangements to ensure we are getting the best out of these new facilities.

We are encouraging everyone to reflect on their operation during the initial months, so that we can share from each other's experiences and make adjustments where appropriate.

In accordance with the new workplace strategy, these new ways of working are designed to ensure that we make the best use of the available space and to support our effectiveness as an organisation, at a time when we are expected to meet significant improvement and efficiency challenges (doing more with less).
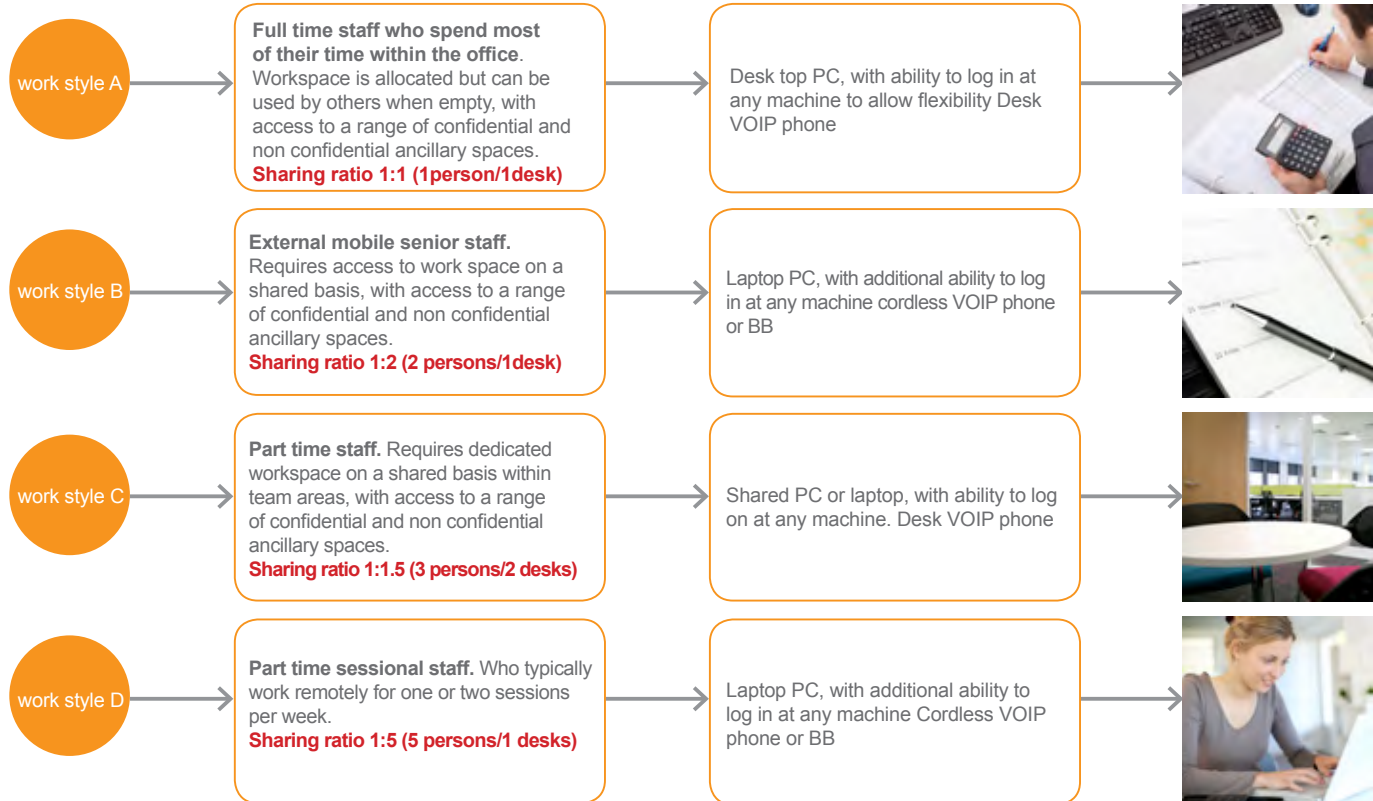
Desk Sharing

In support of our new office environment, NES has put in place four different primary workplace styles:

work style A → **Full time staff who spend most of their time within the office**. Workspace is allocated but can be used by others when empty, with access to a range of confidential and non confidential ancillary spaces. **Sharing ratio 1:1 (1person/1desk)** → Desk top PC, with ability to log in at any machine to allow flexibility Desk VOIP phone →

work style B → **External mobile senior staff.** Requires access to work space on a shared basis, with access to a range of confidential and non confidential ancillary spaces. **Sharing ratio 1:2 (2 persons/1desk)** → Laptop PC, with additional ability to log in at any machine cordless VOIP phone or BB →

work style C → **Part time staff.** Requires dedicated workspace on a shared basis within team areas, with access to a range of confidential and non confidential ancillary spaces. **Sharing ratio 1:1.5 (3 persons/2 desks)** → Shared PC or laptop, with ability to log on at any machine. Desk VOIP phone →

work style D → **Part time sessional staff.** Who typically work remotely for one or two sessions per week. **Sharing ratio 1:5 (5 persons/1 desks)** → Laptop PC, with additional ability to log in at any machine Cordless VOIP phone or BB →

There are no hard and fast boundaries around teams however there are areas of workspaces that are allocated to teams with sharing ratios being the responsibilities of the teams themselves. All the available space and facilities within the building **is available to all workers** so they can access the space that is most suited to the tasks they need to perform.

15

NES has carried out an Equality & Diversity Impact assessment of our Edinburgh move to make sure we know where we need to make reasonable adjustments to workspace allocation e.g. for members of staff who have mobility problems, require specialist equipment or who have other circumstances which require individual consideration. This is a practice that we will apply across all our locations as we implement our Property and Workplace Strategies. We consult widely with managers and staff before finalising workspace allocations.

We are also guided by health and safety procedure HSP 01 'Process Change Management' which requires that all changes that could affect the health and safety of our staff, visitors and others affected by NES work activities will be formally assessed before implementation and an appropriate plan put in place.

Open Plan Working

Our Workplace Strategy commits us to open plan working for all and is supported by the provision of small and large meeting rooms and quiet/confidential workspaces. Section 6 covers the policy on ways of working in an open plan setting.
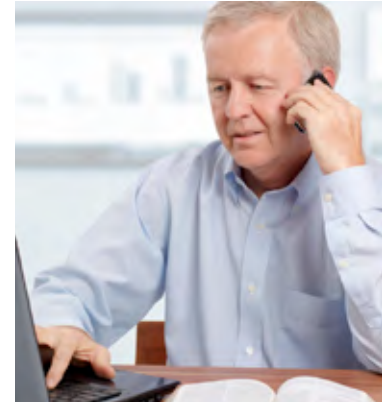
*"the focus of this approach is on the space being flexible and of all the facilities within the building being available to **all workers**, so they can access the space that is most suitable for the tasks they need to perform."*

16

A New Approach

Sharing a new, more open and dynamic work environment fully requires some adjustment to established office etiquette. This will ensure that an effective and harmonious workplace can operate for everyone based on common sense and courtesy and in line with our dignity at work principles.
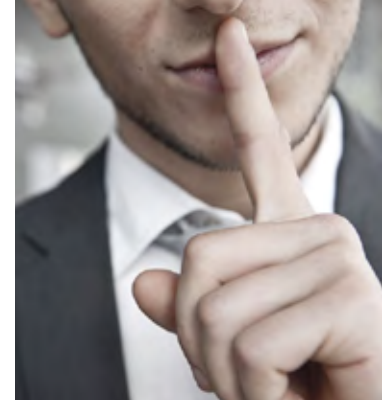
To help create and maintain a positive working environment, some initial simple courtesies have been devised and these are outlined below. All staff should take steps to adopt these new working practices for the benefit of colleagues.

Line Managers have a key role to play in ensuring the fair and equitable application of the policy. Steps should be taken to ensure clarity of expectations, and support will be provided for helping individuals to ensure they are able to meet them, ensuring best use of the new office environment.

Noise & Distraction

Conversation and buzz are important parts of working life as is the need for concentration and privacy from time to time. Please respect that others will be working nearby. Working to the following will help us all.

- avoid holding meetings or long or loud conversations in the workspace – move to a more appropriate setting
- conversely if you need more privacy or concentration for periods, remember that you can move to one of the study spaces

"To help create and maintain a positive working environment, some initial simple courtesies have been devised"

- if your plans change rethink your space requirements and move to a more appropriate setting freeing up space that might be more appropriate for someone else's needs

- visitors should ideally be seen away from workspace

- There are a variety of bookable and non-bookable meeting rooms available, which are designed specifically for different group sizes. When arranging a meeting or looking for a space, care should be taken to book the right size of space so that maximum use can be made of the available capacity.

- remember, someone's presence at their desk does not necessarily mean they are available – adopt the concept of the 'virtual door' when entering local workspace and ask if it is convenient for them to stop what they are doing

- remember if someone approaches you when you are busy, it is OK to politely ask them to come back at a time that is more convenient

- it may be possible that our phone tones can be adjusted – use low if possible and also think about the impact on colleagues of your personal mobile phone or blackberry ringing out – carry your phone with you. It is also a good idea to keep your personal phone on 'vibrate' in the office

- we all have different voice levels – when using the phone think about this in terms of impact on colleagues – there are private spaces throughout the building if you are going to be on a long call

- If you are required to use other equipment as part of your daily activity which may result in increased noise levels or you are having a confidential conversation you should consider moving to a more appropriate setting.

Tidiness, Appearance & Housekeeping

If you have an allocated workspace, personalisation of that space is fine but do take into account those working around you and others who will use your work space, when you are not present, to ensure the appearance, effectiveness and safety of the space is not compromised.

- maintain storage and filing within agreed allocations

- when you leave your workspace at the end of your working day it must be cleared of all files and suitable for use by another member of staff

- if you are going to be away from the workspace for more than three hours (roughly equivalent to half a day) you are expected to log out, tidy up your workspace and make sure files are stored appropriately. You may for example be working on sensitive documents which you are expected to put away. However we do not want staff to be constantly packing and unpacking files - this would not be a good use of time

- Eating is permitted at desks but you are encouraged to take a break away form your desk when having lunch/refreshments: there are tea and coffee points in the building and there are cafes and sandwich shops very close to Westport 102

- For this reason, the minimum time away from desk where this will apply is clarified above as a means of helping people to understand when a workstation should be made available and when this is not necessary. This will enable colleagues to identify which PCs are free on the basis that they are available to log in to, and the workspace is clear for use.

- To maximise the use of the available space, moving forward, space usage will continue to be monitored and reviewed, in line with the property strategy.

Please raise any concerns with either the workplace environment, use of space or the behaviour of others with your line manager in the first instance.

20

Electronic document storage

Most business documents today are received or produced in electronic form (as MS Word documents, spreadsheets, emails, and so on). A diminishing volume of information still comes to us on paper (letters or forms). These can be scanned using the MFDs if there is a business requirement to retain them and keep them accessible. (Many circulars or notices can simply be recycled after reading. Some forms may be destroyed as soon as the data is captured.)

Most NES documents will be retained in electronic format, either on the network shared drives or on the new Enterprise Content Management System (ECMS). Please follow the guidance for your team or for particular business processes on where documents should be held. You also need to bear in mind copyright requirements – if you need advice contact our Data Protection Officer.

In general: you should use network shared drives for business documents – not hard drives or flash drives (which are not backed up) or personal drives (which are inaccessible to others).

Section 7

Technologies for Smart Working

Technologies for Smart Working

Our aim in NES is to ensure that staff have access to all the technology they need to help them do their job regardless of where they may be or indeed when they might need it.

User Technologies
NES has a number of technologies already in place or being developed to support end user needs.

Wireless Networks
Starting with Westport 102, our aim is to deliver a full wireless network over the whole NES estate to ensure our staff can access our network anywhere within our buildings.

There are two wireless systems – **nesroam** for NES staff access to the NES network and **nesguest** for visitor access to the internet

The current nesguest password is available on the intranet and is regularly changed for security reasons.

Laptops
As staff are more mobile it becomes more appropriate for them to be allocated laptops instead of desktop PCs because of the greater flexibility they provide. This trend is likely to continue as we move to our one device per person target. All our laptops are encrypted to ensure compliance with information governance requirements.

Our aim is to over time introduce technologies that are not device specific and enable us to make quick connections to peripherals such as monitors etc. This will be rolled out as we develop our Workplace Strategy.

"Our aim in NES is to ensure that staff have access to all the technology they need to help them do their job"

Working from other premises, home and on the move.
Increasingly our staff need to be able to gain access to our network when they are in non-NES offices, at home and on the move. Many of our users gain access to our network from home through the N3 remote access service using local wireless connections and their NES laptops. We also have plans to make Groupwise and Video Conferencing available on the web to be accessible from any computer.

For those staff who do need it, we provide access to our network through 3G on their laptops. Whilst this service can only ever be as good as the available 3G signal this connectivity continues to be valuable to those who make use of it.

Blackberries
The introduction of Blackberries has proved extremely popular with staff in recent years allowing access to email, calendar and phone from anywhere. As our existing contracts expire we will be looking to source newer and better devices. As the smart phone market evolves, we will continue to monitor this situation to see if Blackberries remain the best value solution.

Encrypted USB Sticks
The use of NES-issued encrypted USB sticks allows staff to transfer documents and information from place to place in a fully secure and easy manner.

VOIP System

The 'Voice over Internet Protocol' (VOIP) system currently being installed will provide a number of benefits. The most important benefit to end-users is that anyone with a VOIP extension number will be able to log onto any VOIP phone which will then behave as their extension number.

Technologies for Teamwork over Distances

With the introduction of the wireless network, this will provide those users that require it to have the facility to continue their call while they move their position within the building without break in service. This will be useful when calls are confidential in nature and require the receiver to move to a more private space.

Printing System
We have introduced a 'pull print' system. With this system nothing gets printed until you go to any one of the Multi-Functional Devices (MFDs) in the office and enter your code. This feature is particularly beneficial if you have something confidential to print or indeed have a number of documents to print as you will not have to keep going to collect them. The MFDs will also serve as photocopiers and scanners.

Through time this system and devices will be rolled out across other NES offices.

Specialist Software
Whilst most staff in NES use the same software packages, there are some staff that require less common software. In the past this has always been installed on the user's 'own' PC or laptop. However where some staff find themselves using different computers from day to day we are introducing facilities to allow their required software to be 'downloaded' to that machine for the period in which they are using it.

"NES has recently invested heavily in Video Conferencing."

Flexible Working

Flexible working is just one strand of the overall approach to AGILE Working.

It is increasingly recognised that flexible working is essential to enable NES to think more creatively about service delivery and to assist staff to balance their home and work commitments.

When dealing with a specific request for flexible working the full Flexible Working Practices – Policy and Procedures should be referred to and can be found at **http://intranet.nes.scot.nhs.uk/ Policies/hr/documents/FlexibleWorkingPolicy.doc**

HR Business Partners are available to provide support on the application of our flexible working options.

Benefits of Flexible Working
The success of flexible working is very much dependent on the commitment from managers and staff to make it work effectively. Flexible working practices should be seen as beneficial to both the individual and the organisation in order to encourage their uptake and integration into the way in which we work. Some of the organisational benefits of encouraging flexible working are:

- increased productivity – giving individuals the opportunity to balance work and domestic responsibilities has been shown to increase the quality of the working life for staff. It also allows for flexibility to meet the demands of the job. This can lead to increased motivation, greater job satisfaction, improved job performance, increased productivity and ultimately job performance;

"The success of flexible working is very much dependent on the commitment from managers and staff to make it work effectively"

28

- flexible working arrangements can lead to a reduction in absenteeism, as employees have the flexibility to adjust their working pattern to meet their domestic responsibilities;

- loyalty and retention – working practices which encourage the retention and loyalty of trained, skilled employees have to be beneficial in terms of the delivery of our strategic objectives; and

- achieving a balanced workforce – NES is committed to achieving as balanced a workforce as possible. By increasing the availability of flexible working practices, this is likely to encourage greater participation of women (who are still regarded as the primary carer in the family) and disabled staff, who might otherwise have left NES as their life circumstances change.

Requesting Flexible Working – The Law

The right to request flexible work is enshrined in law in the UK and is fully developed within NHS Scotland PIN Guidelines and NES policies. It gives the 'right to request' flexible working to parents of children under 17 (or disabled children up to 18) and carers of dependent adults.

Managers are not obliged to grant a request, but must give sound business reasons if they refuse. You may appeal if you feel a request has been unreasonably refused. The law requires you to make a case showing that the new work arrangements are workable and will not adversely affect service delivery.

NES has exceeded legal requirements by agreeing to consider requests for new working arrangements from all employees who have at least 26 weeks service, providing no earlier requests have been made within 12 months.

You can request to:

- change the number of hours that you work
- change the times that you are required to work
- work from home

Considering an Application
When asked to consider an application for flexible working, managers should ensure that they consider it fairly and consistently and make an objective and fair decision which could stand up to legal scrutiny if necessary. This can be done as follows:

- look for ways to accommodate the request rather than finding a means for turning it down.
- ensure that the needs of the team and the Directorate are fully considered. While it is recognised that there may be circumstances when it is not possible to grant an application, managers will be expected to provide a comprehensive written justification for their decision.
- ensure that the needs of other staff in the area are taken into account.
- take into account the extent to which hardship will arise if the application is refused.

Research has also shown that older workers often value flexible working and that it can benefit a wide range of staff which we are committed to supporting wherever possible.

"Research has also shown that older workers often value flexible working and that it can benefit a wide range of staff"

All requests for flexible working should be made by completing the Flexible Working Application Form **http://intranet.nes.scot.nhs. uk/Policies/hr/documents/FlexibleWorkingPolicy.doc** Flexible working may also constitute a 'reasonable adjustment' under legislation and we take that fully into account in reaching decisions.

To become more flexible and agile in the way we work - which is central to the delivery of NES' workplace vision - managers are encouraged to refer to section 2 and 3 of the Flexible Working Practices – Policy and Procedures

What are the Flexible Working Options Available?
Flexible Working options can be divided into two areas. These are **Flexible Time** and **Flexible Place**.

Flexible Time covers:
- Flexitime
- Compressed Hours
- Part-time working
- Job-sharing
- Reduced Working Year (including Term-time Working)
- Time off in Lieu (TOIL)

Flexible Place covers:
- Homeworking
- Working from other offices
- Working as a virtual team
- Sharing space in the office

An overview of the options are as follows:

Flexible Time Options cover:

Flexitime
Flexitime allows you to vary daily hours of work around 'core' hours. It allows you to vary work start and finish time and vary the length and timing of your lunch break. The scheme also allows you to carry over any credit or debit in hours accrued or owed beyond one accounting period (four weeks) and ultimately allows you to take time off for the extra hours that they have worked.

Compressed Hours
You work your standard working hours in fewer days – e.g. one week's hours worked in four days, or two week's worked in nine days. There is a range of patterns of varying complexity.

Part-time Working
There is no universal definition of part-time working. Government statistics define it as working less than 30 hours per week, but in practice, it means working anything less than the normal full-time contracted hours for a particular job

Staff are often recruited on a part-time basis while others ask to reduce their hours, with pro rata reductions in salary.

Job Sharing
This is a particular form of part time working, where two or more people share a full time job.

Reduced Working Year (Including Term-Time Working)
Flexible working in the form of a reduced working year can take a number of forms. One of the most common examples is that of term-time working, which is a formal agreement whereby the duties and responsibilities of a post are carried out (either full-time or part-time) during school terms. It allows you to remain on a permanent contract and gives you unpaid leave during school holidays. The salary of the post is reduced proportionately to the hours worked. These principles would apply regardless of whether a reduced working year contract is explicitly linked to school terms or not.

Time off in Lieu (TOIL)
TOIL is a form of flexible hours working that allows hours to be varied across days, by paying back extra hours worked on one day with time off on other days.

Flexible place options are:
Homeworking/Working from Home

Occasional
Occasional home working from home is carried out where your contractual base is the NES office but you carry out work from home on occasional days, as agreed with your line manager.

It is a voluntary and co-operative arrangement between you and your line manager. It enables you to work from home on an ad hoc basis to complete a particular piece of work and you are not required to complete a formal application form.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, NES has a responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of employees. Guidance on health and safety issues together with a generic risk assessment is provided on the health and safety section of the intranet.

You should consider both documents prior to homeworking. If the homeworking deviates from the generic assessment the assessment should be amended to suit.

Managers should monitor working from home as part of their general management responsibilities to ensure it is effective and proportionate to meeting organisational requirements and in support of other team members.

Contracted Working from home
This is covered by the NES Homeworking Policy. A formal application must be completed and approved for contractual homeworking i.e. to make your home your contracted base. This does not preclude you however from working in the office from time to time.

A formal risk assessment must be carried out by the home worker after a briefing from the Health and Safety adviser.

Working from other offices
This Involves working from the most effective location and reducing the need to travel. You may choose to work from other NES offices utilising appropriate available workspace.

Sharing space in the office
If you do not have an allocated desk, you can choose a work space appropriate to the task in hand e.g. standard desk, study booth/quiet area.

Choosing Flexible Working Options
All the options are important in terms of equality and diversity. Choosing which styles of work are appropriate depends on:

- analysing the tasks involved in the job role, in terms of how effectively they can be done at different times and in different locations
- the preferences of the staff member and being able to meet their aspirations
- the potential of choices to reduce the financial and environmental footprint of the organisation's working practices
- any impacts on teamwork that may arise
- reasonable adjustments

Managing Flexible Working
Managing flexible working involves different ways of keeping in contact with your staff, assessing workloads and monitoring and assessing performance. For the team this will involve greater sharing of schedules with colleagues and managers, and updating about work in progress. Over time, however, the amount of working in geographically dispersed and virtual teams could increase and management and team working skills need to evolve accordingly. There will be an increased focus on managing outcomes.

For teams it is important to develop protocols about communication and reporting, so as to work effectively and maintain team cohesion. When working in different locations and at different times, social relationships need to be maintained and appropriate online and offline communication mechanisms need to be considered.

Good communication, working relationships and trust between all team members is essential to making this work effectively.

Teamwork protocols
It is important to have clear expectations about what is to be done and about communications within the team. The sorts of things teams need to consider are:

- a requirement to let others know where and when you are working (this includes any consideration of any issues associated with lone working)
- sharing of calendars and schedules
- rigorous use of electronic document management systems, to ensure work is easily accessible
- being flexible about flexible working – to ensure that no individual is disadvantaged by the choices of others, e.g. in providing office cover
- etiquette in online communications, and behaviour in virtual meetings
- signposting availability for phone contact or online discussion
- fairness in use of space when in the office. Just as with desk-sharing, there needs to be a degree of challenge, at least in the initial stages. To a large extent however teams should be able to do this for themselves, and monitor their own team's adherence to the standards required.
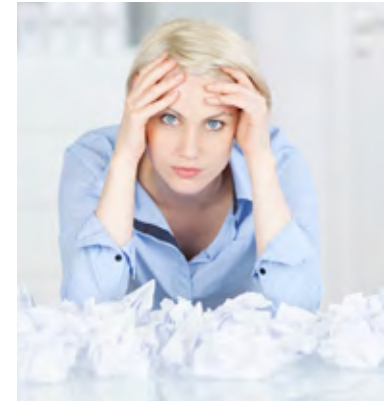
Rethinking meetings

It is important also to rethink meetings. We know one of the themes that has come out of the Activity Based Costing exercise is that amount of time we spend in preparing for and attending internal meetings. Routine sharing of information can be carried out through online processes and wherever possible, meetings should be held using audio, video or web conferencing.

In reaching decisions about holding meetings, attention should always be given to the cumulative effects of meetings, and the need to reduce our need for office space and to reduce the need to travel.

Dealing with problems and issues

Before adopting flexible working practices, people are sometimes worried about issues such as being isolated, loss of personal space in the office and loss of team spirit or team effectiveness.

It is the responsibility of teams to look out for each other, and in particular, for managers to spot problems and resolve them before they become major issues. These may be teased out through regular conversations and if necessary, the manager and team member can agree an alternative work style. It is about finding the right work style for the individual and the team and about providing the appropriate support to overcome the particular problem.

"It is the responsibility of teams to look out for each other, and in particular, for managers to spot problems and resolve them before they become major issues."

37