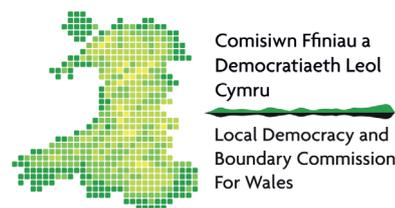


Case Study

Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales

Healthy Working Wales Bronze Small Workplace Health Award



The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW) is an independent Welsh Government sponsored body with the main purpose of publishing a programme of work which keeps under review the electoral arrangements for the 22 principal councils.

A team of 11 based in Cardiff make electoral review recommendations which are in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

Highlights

- We set out to ensure we had an understanding of all our staff needs, acknowledging staff would have different requirements and a one-size-fits-all solution was not going to be the best approach.
- Full risk assessments are regularly carried out to identify staff needs. The Commission works with and around staff to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing needs are catered for.
- Staff are able to log on and off as and when they wish as long as their work is completed. 1-2-1 and staff meetings are now held via Skype and Teams whilst a WhatsApp group has been set up which everyone can contribute to and chat with each other.
- We have continued with our stretching classes virtually with the trainer who used to carry this class out in person in the office. This gives staff the opportunity to take time away from their computer and responsibilities to have some 'me time' to help with any pressures they may be feeling.
- We have seen the benefits of remote and flexible working practices on enhanced communication, reduced travel, making savings in both time and money and ultimately in some cases leading to increased productivity.
- The LDBCW acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in increased stress and anxiety for many people and the restrictions imposed has led to increased isolation for some. As a result, we undertake surveys with staff to establish areas of need and we support staff and explore what changes or improvements can be made.
- On the journey so far with Healthy Working Wales the LDBCW has been supported to feel confident and able to implement health and wellbeing initiatives with our workforce.

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Flexible solutions to individual needs

We set out to ensure we had an understanding of all our staff needs, acknowledging staff would have different requirements and a one-size-fits all solution was not going to be the best approach.

Full risk assessments are regularly carried out to identify staff needs, the Commission work with and around the staff to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing needs are catered for.

Risk assessments have identified that some staff members live alone, some do not want to work from home full-time and some have caring responsibilities for various generations within their families. Staff are encouraged to work flexibly to fit in with their lifestyles whilst working from home. The commission has been mindful that the challenges of the pandemic can have adverse effects on mental health and we want to do what we can to minimise any adverse impacts. We continue to look for options which best suit staff members' situations and we have prioritised enabling a positive work life balance.

Additional workstations have been set up in the office to enable some staff to work in the office if they wish and to ensure social distancing remains in place.

Our approach to remote working

Staff are able to log on and off as and when they wish and, as long as the work is completed, there is no need for them to worry.

Home equipment is provided to members of staff to ensure they have a suitable set up at home to alleviate any potential postural or musculoskeletal issues. The equipment will remain in the home of the staff member on a permanent basis (until they leave the organisation) to allow them to continue to work flexibly if required. Staff who are unable to collect equipment in person have been able to have the equipment delivered.



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Benefits

Taking this flexible approach to best cater for our workforce, we have supported them in gaining a positive work life balance, which ultimately supports their wellbeing.

Staff feel supported and empowered which helps facilitate a healthy working environment for all involved.

We have seen the benefits of remote and flexible working practices on enhanced communication, reduced travel, making savings in both time and money and ultimately in some cases leading to increased productivity.

“Lockdown has taught us that flexible working is possible.”

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“The Commission made this as smooth as it could possibly be during this strange period of uncertainty. The challenges were more external, with the logistics of working in a home with no office space and a change in routine.”

Lessons learnt

While realistically working from home could have been an option prior to the pandemic, it has now become the ‘norm’ for many and now the Commission lets staff chose the option that best fits their needs and provides them with full support. This has resulted in benefits for both the staff group and the business as a whole.

The Commission acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in increased stress and anxiety for many people and the restrictions imposed have led to increased isolation for some. As a result, we undertake surveys with staff to establish areas of need and we support staff and explore what changes or improvements can be made.

On the journey so far with HWW the LDBCW has been supported to feel confident and able to implement health and wellbeing initiatives with our workforce. Much of the focus has been on promoting mental health as we recognise this as an important area which can affect everyone at some point in their lives.

Working towards the HWW Silver Award has given us a steer as to the requirements needed within a workplace to best support the mental wellbeing of the workforce. This has enabled us to be clear in our approach and better prepared to support the needs of the workforce especially during these difficult times.



“Initially a challenge as, understandably, it was a sudden change to our way of working. However, the transition was made easier by the Commission. The management team have been flexible and supportive. Each member of staff seems to have adapted well overall.”