



## **Langstane Housing Association**

### **Hybrid Working Policy**

Date approved by Leadership Team	February 14, 2024
Board of Management / Committee name	People Committee
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<b>Version</b>	<b>Date approved</b>	<b>Changes</b>
V1	15-04-2024	First issue
V2		
V3		

## 1. Introduction

Langstane promotes hybrid working for employees and recognises that offering flexibility can enhance productivity and be beneficial to wellbeing and work-life balance. This policy sets out Langstane's approach to hybrid working and is designed to support our teams with decision making on hours, location and approach to work whilst ensuring employees are operating safely at work and that business and customer needs are being met.

It is recognised that there may be some roles for which Hybrid working may not be possible due to the nature of the work. Where this is the case, and an employee requests hybrid working it is the responsibility of the Line Manager to explain why this is the case for the role in question.

Hybrid working is a benefit and not a contractual entitlement, and any hybrid working arrangement must still meet the needs of the organisation and the customer. Hybrid working will form a voluntary agreement and the employees contractual place of work remains their usual office base.

This policy applies to all employees at all levels of the organisation, as well as our Board of Management.

## 2. Principles

Hybrid working does not work for everyone, for various reasons, and either the employee or Management can request that arrangements change or cease if it is felt that there is an impact on the individual, the team, Langstane or the customer. At the commencement of any new hybrid working arrangement it is recommended that a trial period is agreed and arrangements are reviewed throughout the trial.

New employees may be required to be office based for a period of time (approximately 1 month, depending on circumstances) at the beginning of their employment to enable knowledge transfer, building working relationships and to become familiar with the organisation. During this time it would be expected that the Line Manager and Team would ensure there is someone present to help support and embed the individual. This may require them to alter their own hybrid working arrangements.

All hybrid working arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are still meeting the needs of individual, team, Langstane and our and customers.

### 2.1 Extent of Hybrid Working Arrangements

The number of days per week each employee spends attending the office compared with working remotely will vary, depending on:

- their individual circumstances;
- the nature of their role;
- what is happening within their role and team at any particular time; and
- the needs of the organisation, including the space we have available at our work locations.

There is an expectation that full time employees on a 5 day a week working pattern will be present in the office at least 3 days per week and those working part time or

on a condensed working pattern will work from the office for the pro-rata equivalent of this.

Given the degree of flexibility that our hybrid working arrangements provide, Langstane expect our workforce to be flexible. Employees may be required to attend work on particular days at the request of their line manager, for example (but not limited to) in-person training, for meetings that their line manager has determined are best conducted in person, or to cover specific organisational needs. Where they have been requested to attend the office on a day that they would normally work remotely, this does not automatically entitle employees to a compensatory remote working day in exchange.

Similarly, there may be circumstances in which we ask employees to work remotely, or to work from such other place as we may reasonably require, when they would otherwise expect to attend the office, for instance:

- for operational needs, for example if we have too many employees attending the office on specific days; or
- in the event of a lockdown/government guidance that employees should work from home if they can.

In such cases, employees will be given as much notice as possible.

## 2.2 Arrangements while working remotely

Employees should remain contactable, able to work free from distractions, and should not have responsibility for matters such as childcare during working hours (except for in unforeseen circumstances where other arrangements cannot be made, e.g. unplanned school closure).

Hybrid working should not impact negatively on employees ability to undertake the full range of their tasks nor result in imposing on colleagues to carry out duties on their behalf. There is an expectation of flexibility on both employee and employers part. Langstane reserve the right to withdraw hybrid working if there are any concerns or if performance is not to the expected standards.

## 2.3 Working hours

While working remotely, employees must be available during their normal hours of work, as set out in their contract of employment, including core working hours (10-12 and 2-4).

Langstane recognise that it is important that employees take sufficient breaks. To help maintain wellbeing, employees are reminded of the need to ensure that they take adequate rest breaks:

- a minimum of 30 minutes off for lunch each day for full time staff.
- a break of at least 20 minutes during each working day that lasts more than six hours.
- the time period between stopping work one day and beginning the next should not be less than 11 hours.

Employees should be as clear as possible with their line manager about their hours of work for days on which they are working remotely. Outlook calendars and out-of-

office messaging must be used to help colleagues to be aware of working times and locations.

## 2.4 Sickness

When working remotely, employees should not work if they are unwell. If they are sick and unable to work, our Sickness Absence Policy applies. Employees should notify their line manager by telephone as soon as reasonably practicable, preferably before the employee is due to begin work.

## 2.5 Technology and equipment

To assist employees to work remotely, they are provided with certain equipment to carry out their role. They must take care of any equipment provided, and notify their line manager/the IT department of any faults with the equipment. If an employee requires any additional equipment, they should discuss this with their line manager.

Any costs incurred as a result of working from home on a temporary or hybrid basis, or additional costs related to setting up their workstation at home (e.g. provision of a desk chair, etc, except where the cost relates to agreed reasonable adjustments), are at the employees expense. This includes but is not limited to utility costs, home insurance costs, stationery and printing costs. Employees may however be able to claim tax relief for household expenses incurred as a result of working from home when they have been asked to do so, provided the expenses are solely work related.

The Government guide is available at [www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home](http://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home)

It is the employees responsibility to make arrangements to ensure their mortgage or tenancy agreement permit them to work from home on a temporary or hybrid basis and that their home is adequately insured for this purpose also.

## 2.6 Health and safety

Employees must have completed the online learning module relating to DSE prior to working remotely, and must implement the guidance therein to ensure that their remote working set-up is appropriate and that they are working in a safe manner. In the interest of ensuring our Duty of Care is met Langstane may periodically request evidence that the remote set up is DSE compliant. Employees must also take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of anyone else who is affected by their work (for example others in their household when they are working from home).

Employees must notify their line manager if:

- they feel any discomfort due to working remotely (such as back pain); or
- they believe that there are any work-related health and safety hazards;
- there are any work-related accidents which occur in their home.

Their line manager will escalate the matter to the HR Manager to consider what action can be taken.

## 2.7 Data Protection

Employees who are working remotely are responsible for keeping information associated with Langstane secure at all times. Specifically, remote workers are under a duty to:

- practice good IT security, including using a unique password for their work laptop (and any other devices they use for work);
- keep all hard copies of work-related documentation secure, including keeping documents locked away at all times except when in use; and
- ensure that work-related information is safeguarded when working in public spaces, for example by:
  - positioning their laptop so that others cannot see the screen;
  - not leaving their laptop unattended; and
  - not having confidential/business-sensitive conversations in public spaces.

In addition, the laptop (and any other equipment) provided by Langstane must be used for work-related purposes only and must not be used by any other member of their household or third party at any time or for any purpose.

Any remote working location must be UK based for insurance and Data Protection purposes.

## 3. Related Policies

This policy links to a number of others in Langstane, including but not limited to; Flexible Working Requests, Lone Working Policy, Working Hours and Time Off, Information Security Policy and relevant Health and Safety Policies.

### Monitoring and Review

The Human Resources Manager holds responsibility for monitoring and updating this policy as necessary. This will be undertaken at least every 3 years.

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