



## Executive Team

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday 21 November 2023
<b>Subject</b>	Hybrid Working
<b>Agenda No.</b>	2
<b>Prepared By</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	Decide

### 1. Background

- 1.1. At their meeting on 22 August 2023, Executive Team agreed that messaging around expected office attendance of two days per week for full-time staff as part of hybrid working should be reinforced and commissioned work from People and Place Services to determine desk requirements based on information provided by divisions. This work has now been completed and an update is given below.
- 1.2. The previous paper can be found at Appendix C.

### 2. Key Points

- 2.1. HR Business Partners have worked closely with Deputy Directors to determine what desk allocations they need to accommodate staff working in the office two days per week if full-time and a proportionate amount of time if part-time. This information has been shared with Place Services to allow them to model whether what was requested could be delivered using our current estate.
- 2.2. The results of the modelling are attached at Annexes A and B and show that it is possible to provide the desks requested by those Divisions who responded to the request. Where no return was provided by a business area, an allocation has been made for them based on full-time equivalent numbers of staff. Using this information, a small number of desks remain unallocated in our main buildings. This unallocated space is discussed in the separate paper from Place Services.
- 2.3. Changes to existing allocations and floor layouts are minimal in Dundee but result in some changes to floor space in Glasgow. Place Services will prepare communications for business areas in advance of these changes.
- 2.4. As part of the exercise to collate this data, we have been clear that offices must be used across the working week.
- 2.5. During the previous discussion, it was agreed that the messaging should be around days rather than percentages of working time as it was felt that was easier for staff to understand. Using percentages could still result in an average of less than a full day and it is not possible for a central direction to be issued given the wide range of work patterns we have in use.



- 2.6. For example, if a part-time member of staff works 20 hours per week across five days, then it would be reasonable to expect them to still attend two days per week, whereas if those 20 hours are worked across three full days, attendance might only be expected one day per week.
- 2.7. Managers will need to have conversations with staff on part-time work patterns to agree an appropriate number of days in the office. When agreeing work patterns and attendance, managers should bear in mind the purpose of asking colleagues to attend the office and also take account of any reasonable adjustments which impact on a colleague's ability to attend the office.
- 2.8. Once Executive Team has agreed this position, further discussion will take place with the trade unions to make them aware we are reinforcing our existing messaging around office attendance.
- 2.9. Communications colleagues will draft central communications following those discussions with the trade unions and Deputy Directors will be asked to make the new plans for desk and space allocations known to their areas.
- 2.10. We would intend to issue staff communications in late November/early December with implementation taking place from January 2024 following the festive break.
- 2.11. It should be noted that we are already taking action against members of staff we are aware of who are refusing to attend the office without a requirement for a reasonable adjustment. It is imperative that we take a consistent approach across the organisation to staff who are not attending the office. A failure to do so will leave us exposed to appeal cases and potential employment tribunals if we have taken action against individuals whom we are aware of while others we are not made aware of are being allowed to work from home without a case for this being a reasonable adjustment. Line managers and Deputy Directors must therefore be applying these requirements consistently across their areas for this to be effective.
- 2.12. We propose that the situation is reviewed in June 2024, six months after implementation. If office attendance has not substantially increased, further options around sub-letting may need to be considered.

### 3. Conclusion

- 3.1. Executive Team is asked to approve the position around reinforcing current expectations of two days per week office attendance for full-time staff and pro-rata for part-time staff and the revised desk allocations in Annexes A and B.
- 3.2. Executive Team is asked to approve a review in June 2024 which may lead to other building utilisation options being considered.



## Appendix A

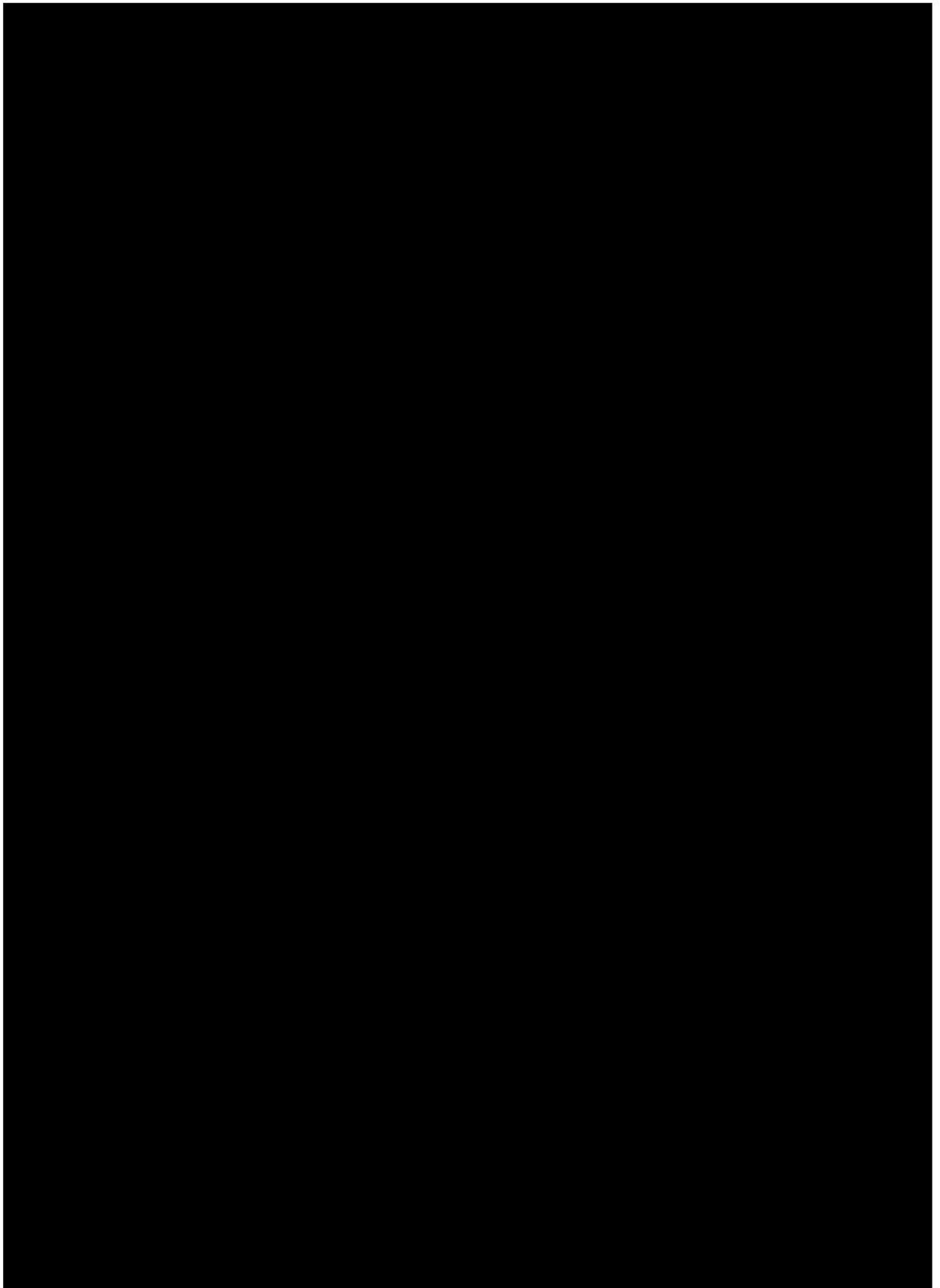
### Agnes Husband House & Enterprise House – Proposed Desk Allocation

@ September, 2023.			
Dundee			
Division	Agnes Husband House		
	Full-Time Equivelant (FTE) <sup>1</sup>	Desk Allocation	Capacity <sup>2</sup> (Average Days Week)
Chief Digital Office			
Client Service Delivery	1055	456	2.16
Finance, Fraud and Procurement	20	12	3.00
Health and Social Care	52	24	2.30
Strategy and Performance	49	24	2.45
People and Place	63	36	2.85
	<b>1239</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>2.55</b>
Division	Enterprise House		
	Full-Time Equivelant (FTE) <sup>1</sup>	Desk Allocation	Capacity <sup>2</sup> (Average Days Week)
Chief Digital Office	58	28	2.41
Client Service Delivery			
Finance, Fraud and Procurement	63	40	3.17
Health and Social Care			
Strategy and Performance			
People and Place			
	<b>121</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>2.79</b>
<b>Total FTE (Dundee)</b>	<b>1382</b>		
	Desks (allocated from table)	620	
	Drop Down Desks	36	
	Unallocated Desks	48	
	<b>Total Desks (Dundee)</b>	<b>704</b>	
<b>Notes:</b>			
- <sup>1</sup> FTE excludes colleagues based in specialised spaces (e.g. mailroom).			
- <sup>2</sup> Capacity is average days per week per FTE that is achievable in the office with the desk allocation to the particular Division.			



## Agnes Husband House – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

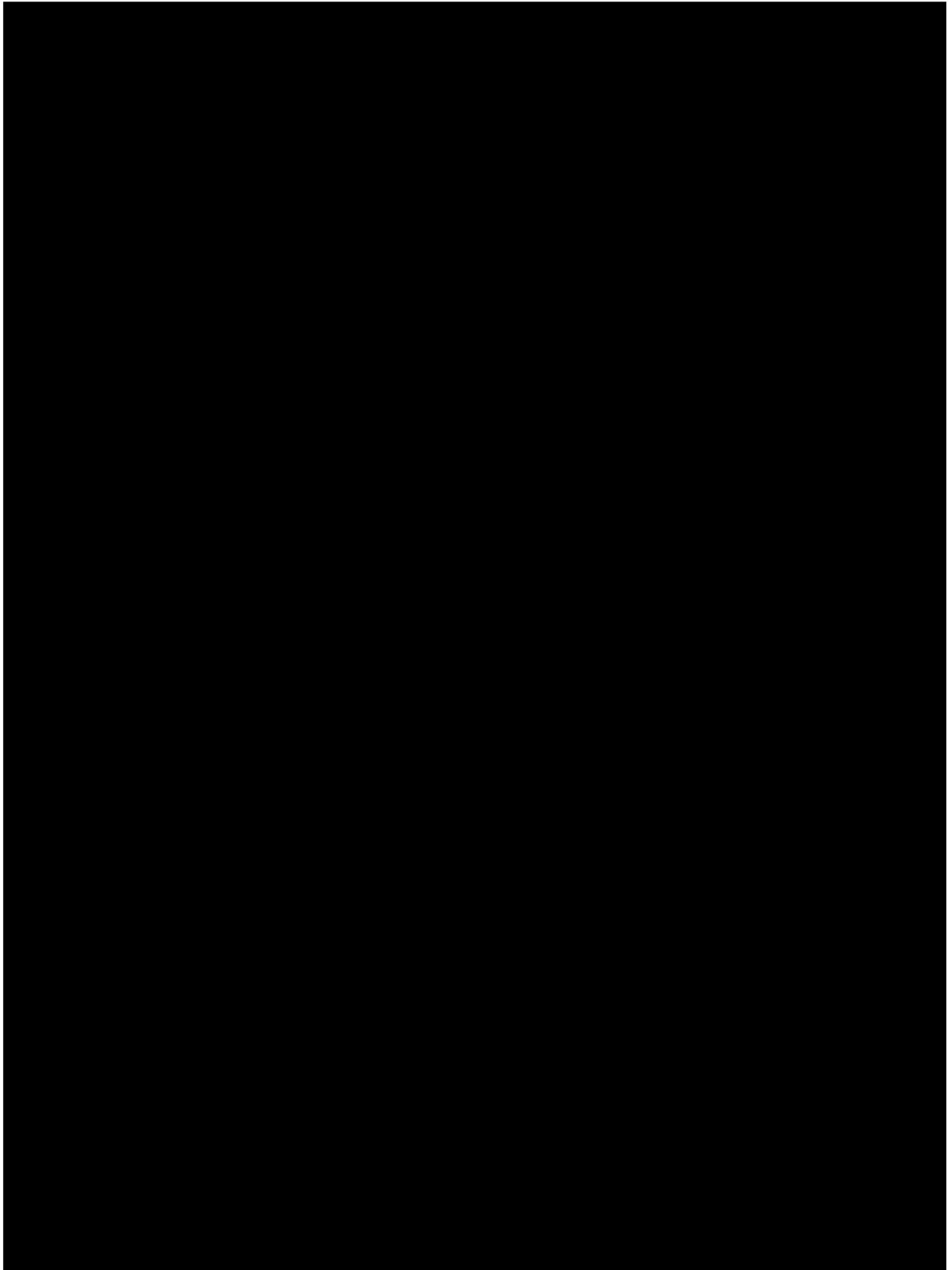
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## Agnes Husband House – 2nd Floor

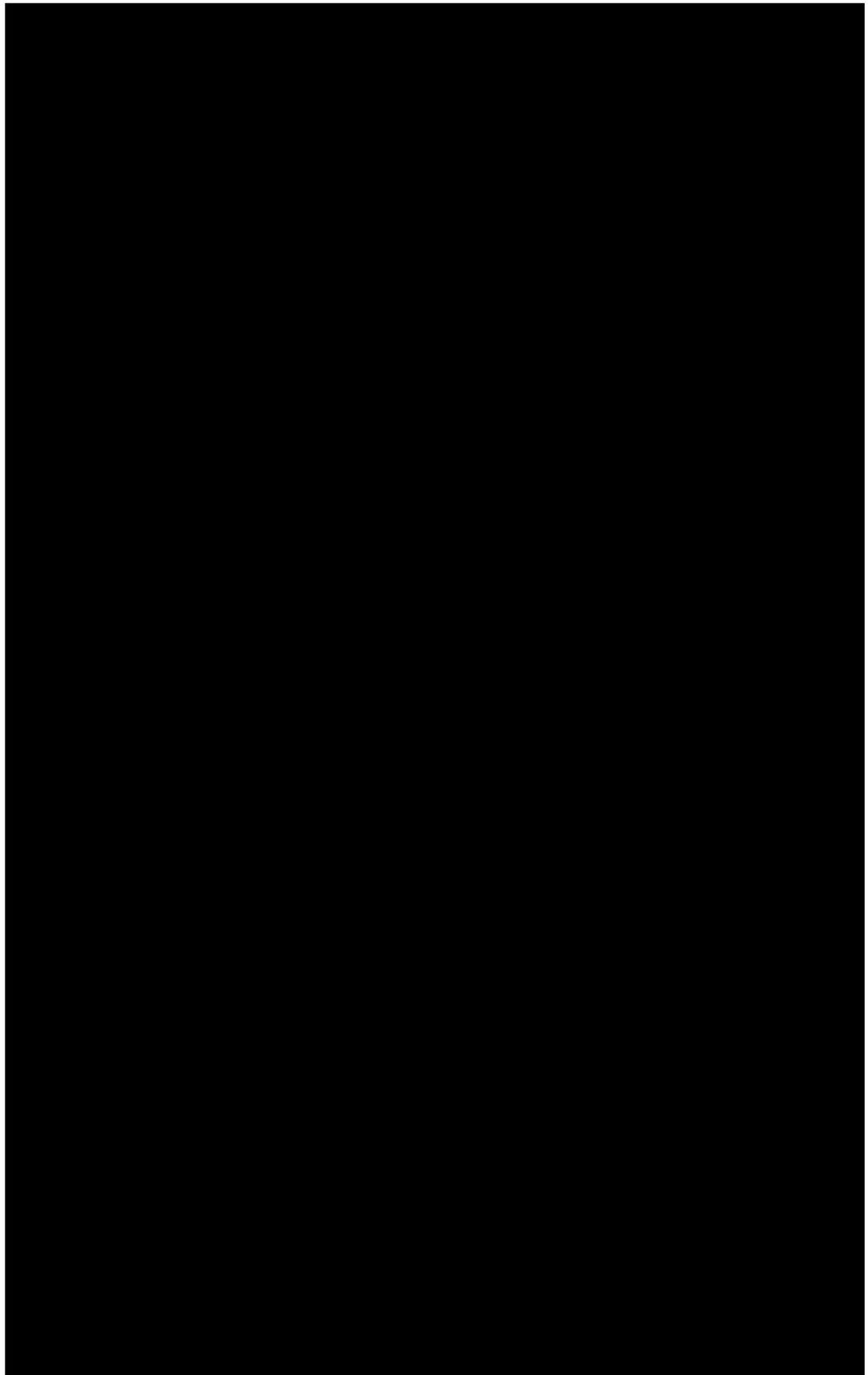
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## Agnes Husband House – 3rd Floor

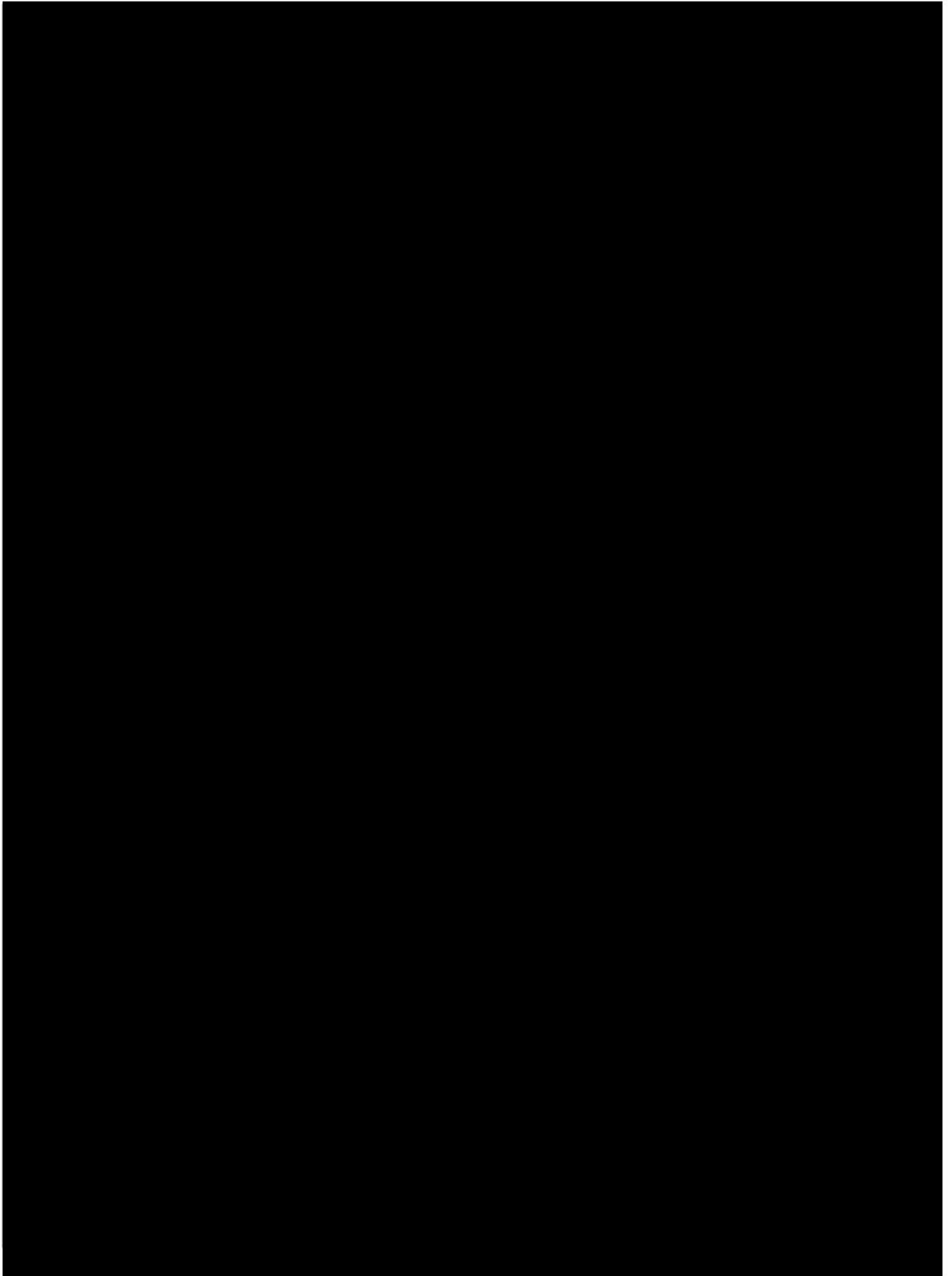
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## Agnes Husband House – 4th Floor

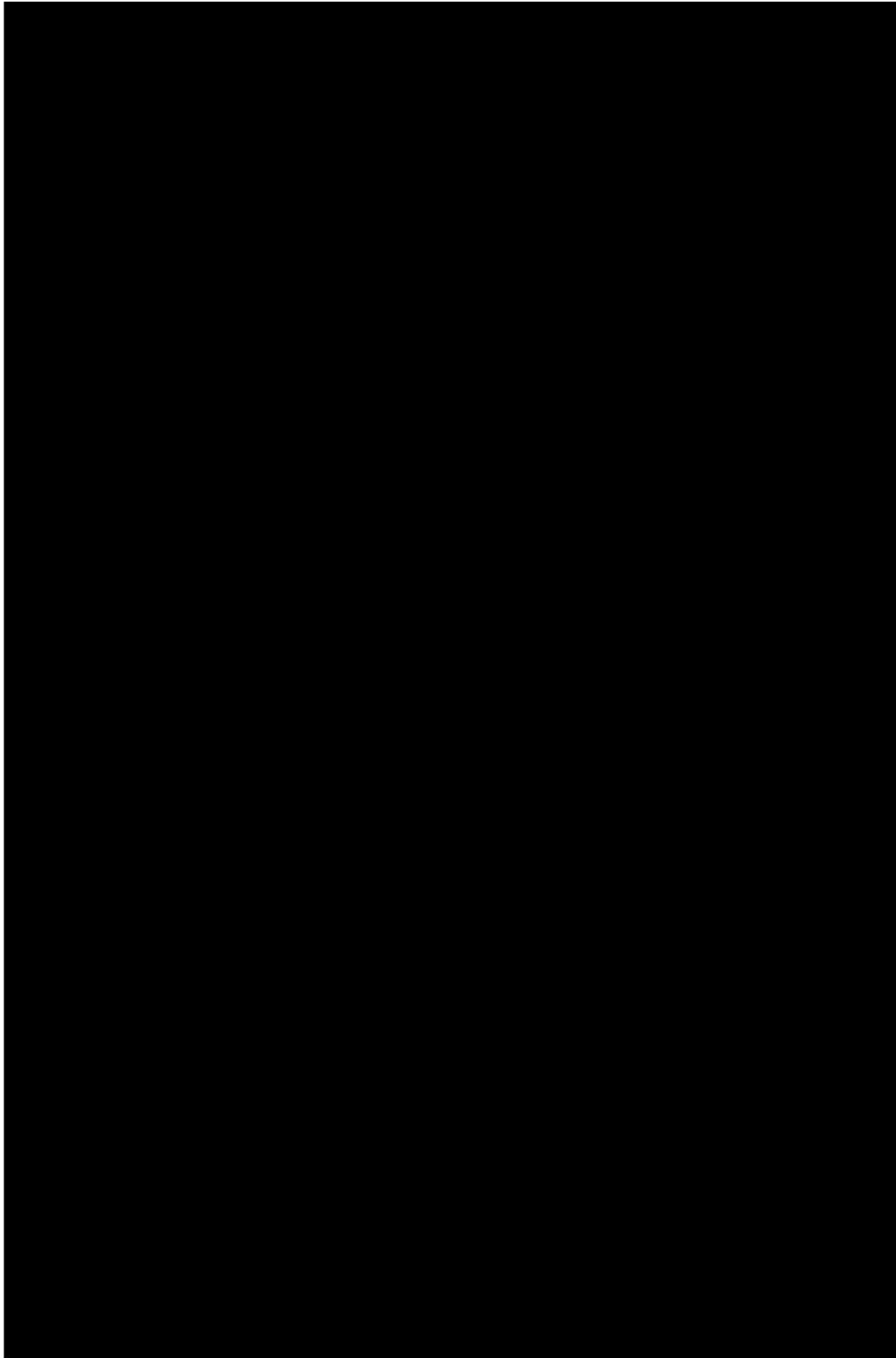
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## Agnes Husband House – 5th Floor

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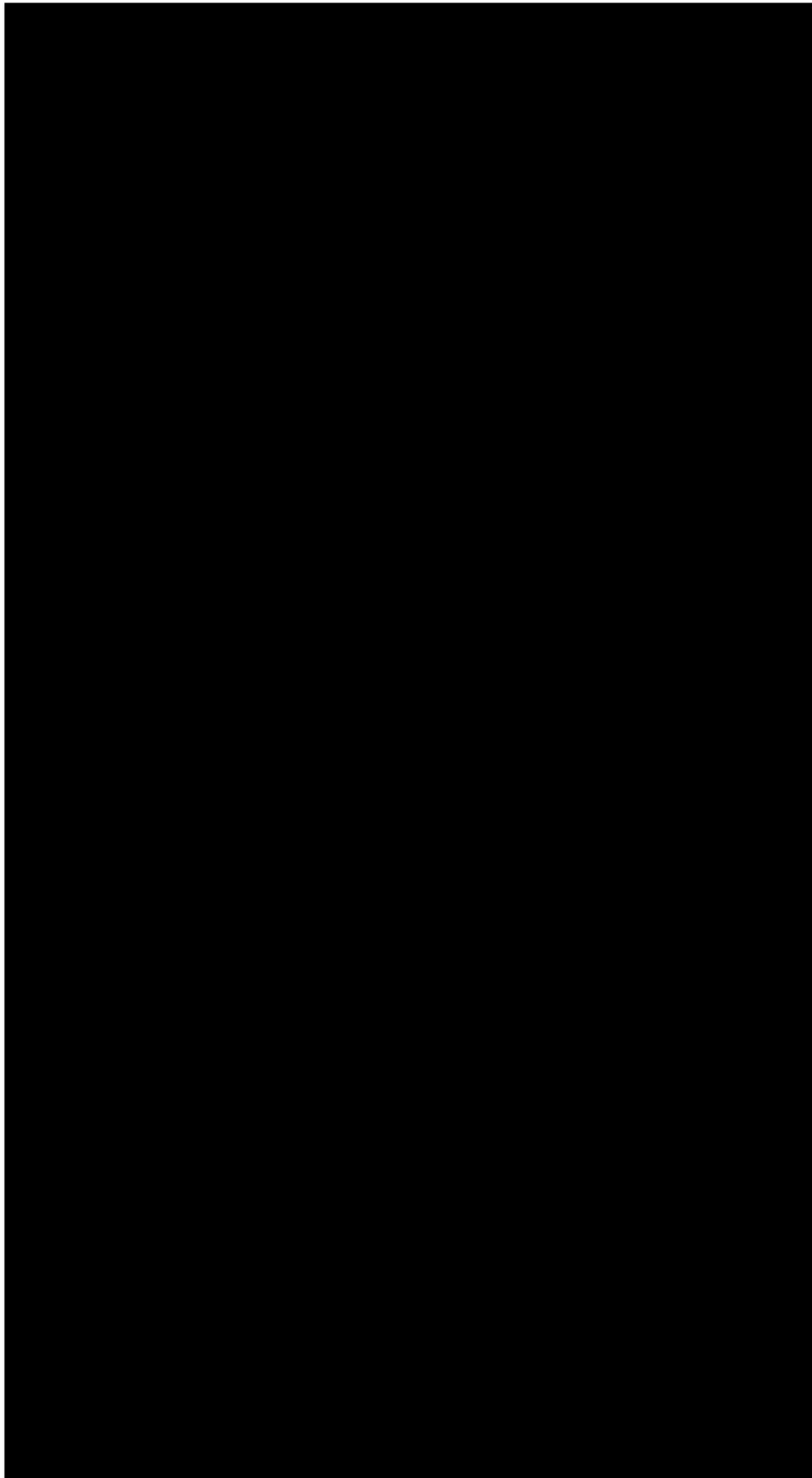






## Enterprise House – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

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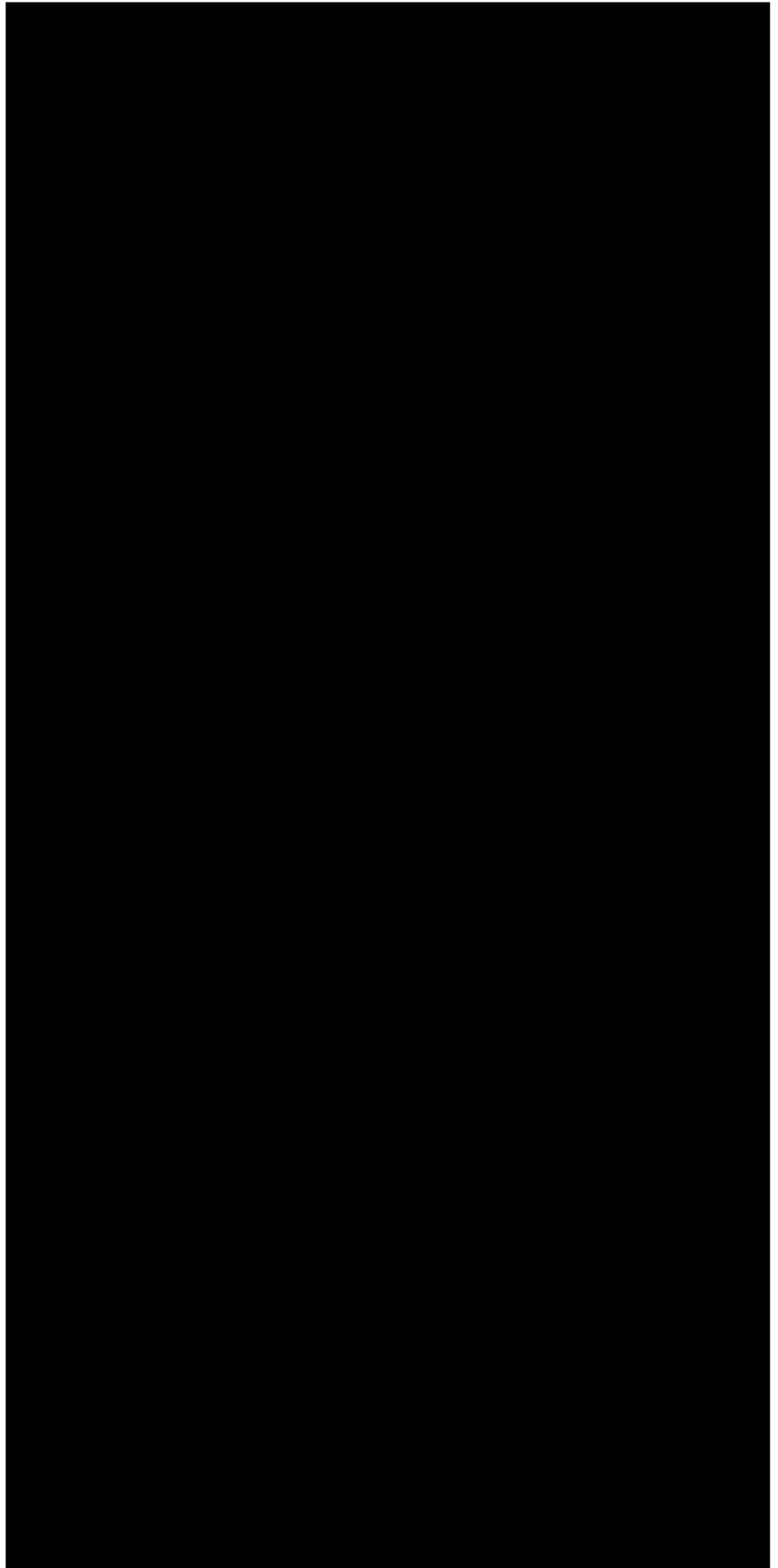


## 220 High Street – Proposed Desk Allocation

- <sup>2</sup> Capacity is average days per week per FTE that is achievable in the office with the desk allocation to the particular Division.

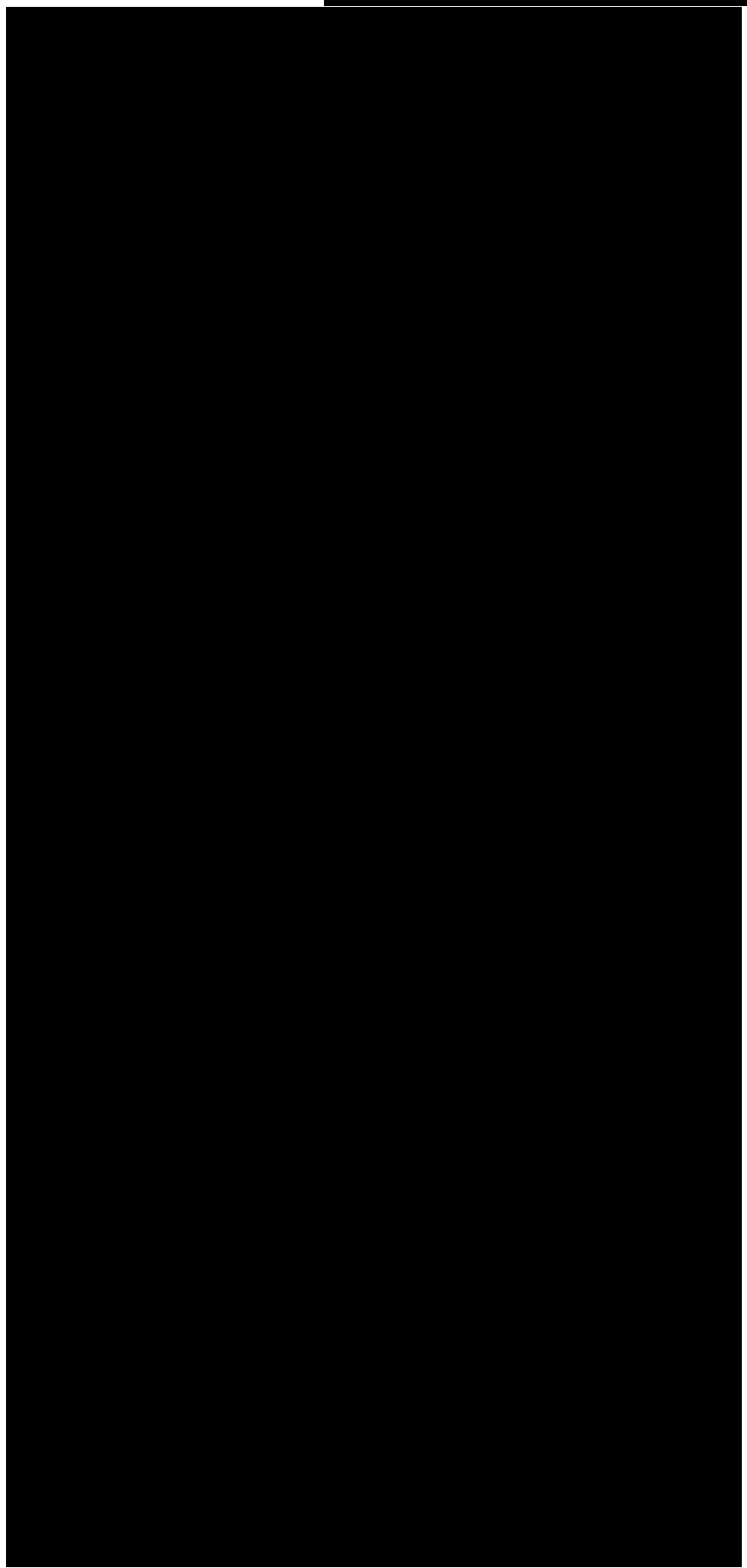


220 High Street – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor





220 High Street – 2nd Floor





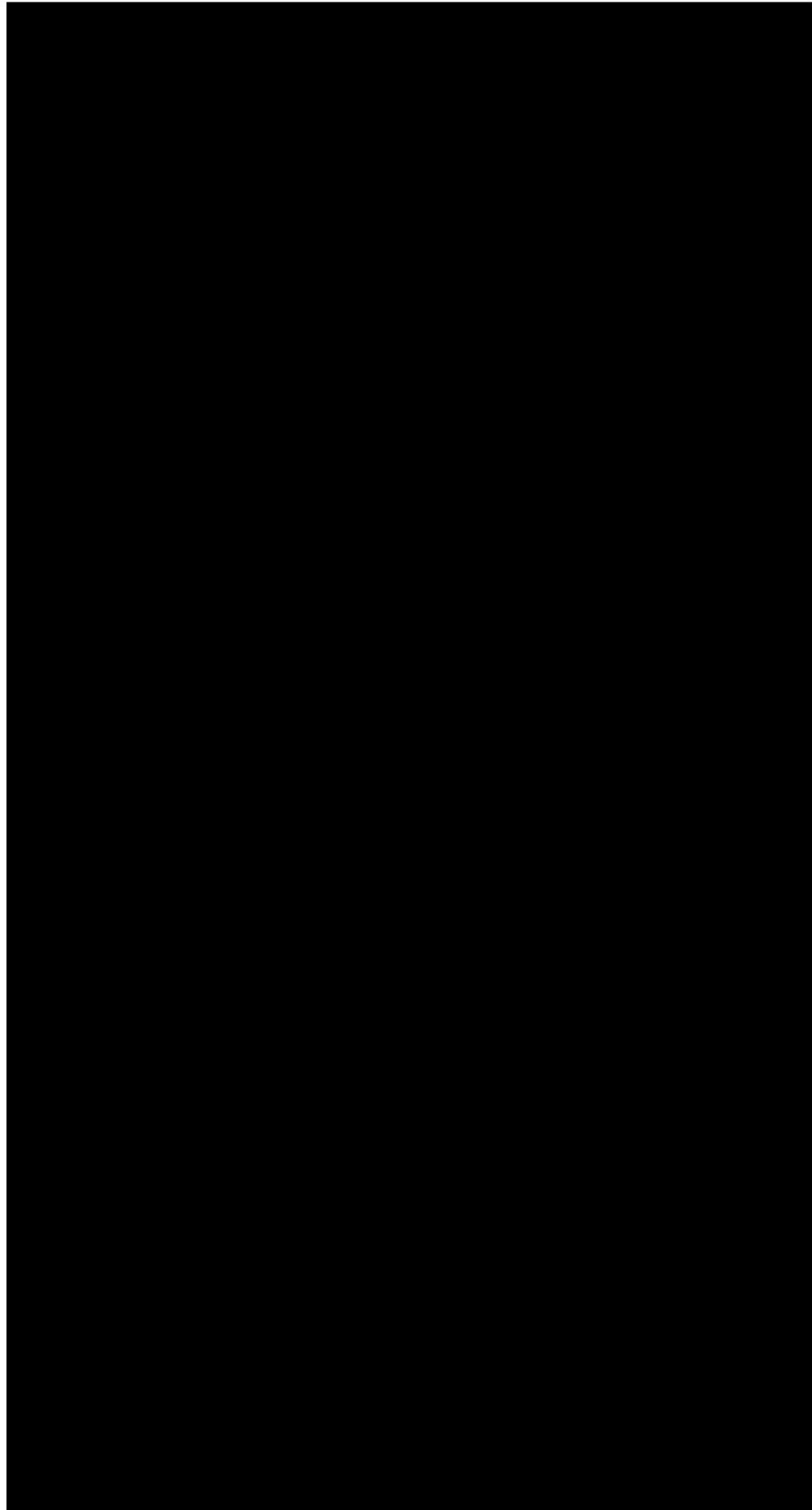
220 High Street – 3rd Floor





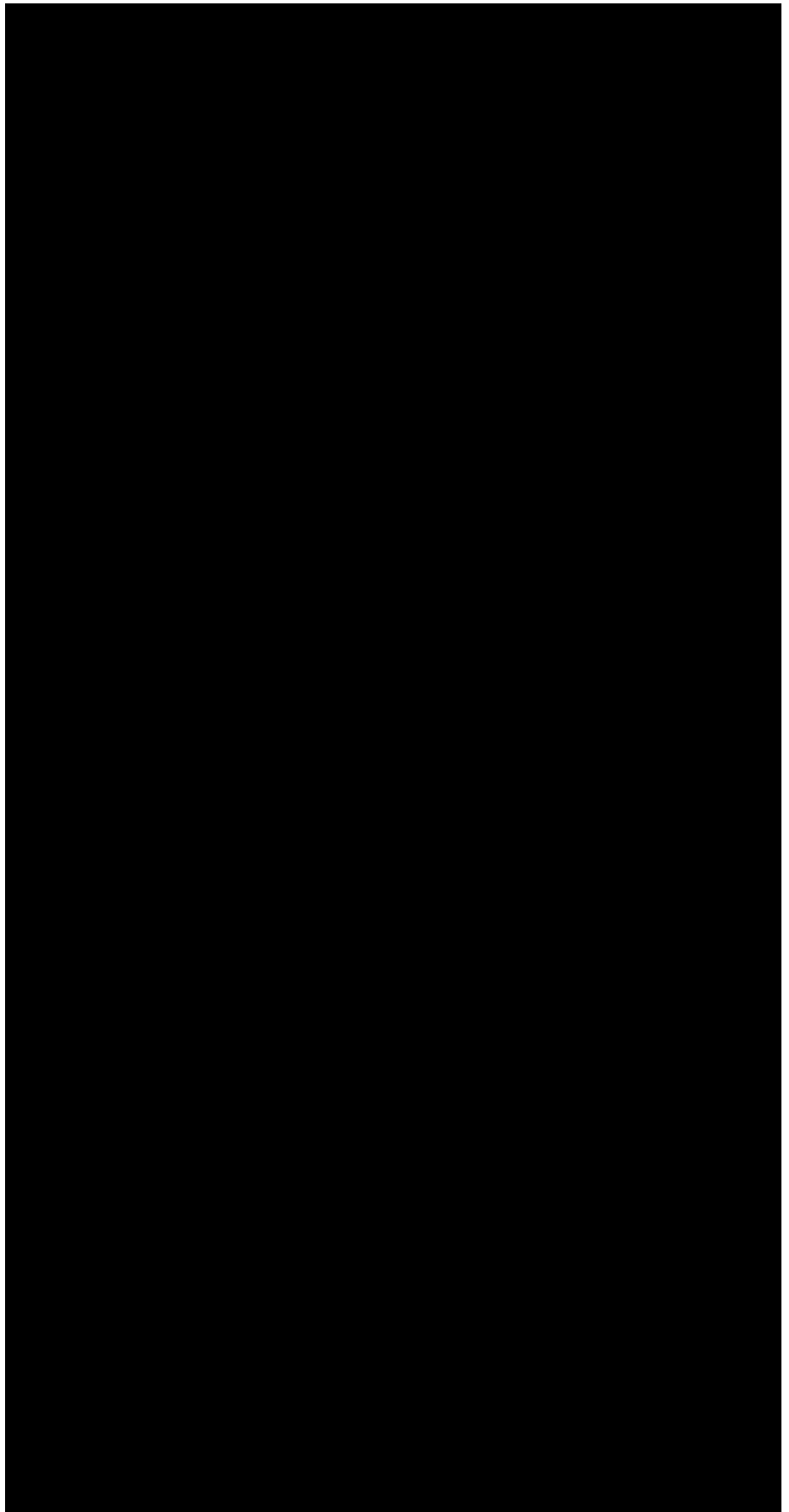
220 High Street – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

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220 High Street – 5<sup>th</sup> Floor



## Appendix C

### Executive Team

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	22 August 2023
<b>Subject</b>	Hybrid Working
<b>Agenda No.</b>	4
<b>Prepared By</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	Decide

### 1. Background

- 3.3. Following the decision to implement hybrid working, messaging has been issued on several occasions regarding expectations around office attendance. This settled on an average of two days attendance per week.
- 3.4. It is clear from analysis of our office utilisation across our central estate (Agnes Husband House, Enterprise House and 220 High Street) that this is not happening in practice with average attendance sitting at around 38% for the 3 month period from mid-January to mid-April 2023.
- 3.5. A paper on colleagues' views of hybrid working prepared by the Our Ways of Working Project was tabled at the People and Place Forum in May. It used data from a survey in March which had a 36% return rate (See Appendix A). A paper on office utilisation was also discussed at the People and Place Forum in June where it was noted that the utilisation was unsustainable and referred the issue to Executive Team for direction.

### 2. Key Points

- 4.1. Those responding to the survey mainly said they attended the office one day per week (47%) or two days per week (28%). However, analysis shows that current attendance is less than one day per week per FTE, clearly indicating that more regular attendance by some colleagues means that there are others who are either not attending on a regular basis or at all.
- 4.2. The survey showed that caring responsibilities and managing their own health conditions were the main factors influencing when colleagues attended the office. They saw the benefits of being in the office as face to face interaction and the availability of facilities for eg photocopying or printing.
- 4.3. Cost of living concerns were reported, both in terms of the cost of commuting and parking but also of heating in the home, indicating that this particular point is less clear cut and will depend on individual circumstances. Recent industrial action in





the transport and education sectors were also cited as reasons why attending the office was more difficult.

- 4.4. Colleagues in Local Delivery reported a different experience of office attendance, with some reporting feeling isolated from other Social Security Scotland colleagues or that the space made available to them did not lend itself to the nature of the role with some lacking facilities for private conversations or Wi-Fi connection. These concerns will have to be addressed if we wish to increase attendance in this specific area.
- 4.5. Whilst around half those responding felt hybrid working arrangements worked well for them, fewer thought that this was the case for their team or the Agency. This appears to indicate that managers need to consider more structure around why they are bringing staff into the office and when.
- 4.6. Respondents felt that there was a lack of clarity on messaging, with different messages having been given at different points in time and managers wanted to see consistency and clear guidance to enable them to challenge individuals who were not following the policy.
- 4.7. The People Advice team has been working with managers in the very small number of cases where a colleague is refusing to attend the office (with one case currently proceeding to disciplinary action) and has developed guidance for managers in handling difficult conversations with those who are reluctant to attend for whatever reason. The Health and Safety team has also put in place a significant number of reasonable adjustments to facilitate a return to the office for those who need them.
- 4.8. We are seeing an increasing culture of staff raising 'grievances' about behaviours which are often a result of colleagues and managers not having appropriate conversations with individuals and addressing behavioural issues timeously. A lack of face to face interaction and a reliance on email or Teams appears to be making this situation worse.
- 4.9. All colleagues have a contractual base in their contracts, which they can be required to attend.
- 4.10. It is clear that an approach of encouraging attendance in the office is not delivering the results sought and if we wish to increase the number of colleagues attending the office, a more directive approach is needed. However, Executive Team will need a clear rationale for this, particularly as this differs from the stance taken by core Scottish Government and will likely be challenged by the trade unions. Our status as a customer facing organisation, the increase we are seeing in behavioural issues and a better ability to provide support for colleagues in a face to face environment are all reasons for ensuring colleagues are attending the office on a regular basis.

### 3. Conclusion

- 5.1. Current office attendance is below one day per week per FTE, significantly below the aspiration of two days.



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- 5.2. If we wish to improve upon this figure, Executive Team is asked to set out an unambiguous direction on the number of days expected office attendance going forward, making it clear what the rationale for the decision is. Based on our available space, it is suggested that this should be two days per week for full-time staff and one day per week for those on alternative work patterns.
  - 5.3. Individual Deputy Directors are asked to make that position clear to their senior leadership teams who will be expected to monitor compliance and act when colleagues do not deliver. Compliance could be set as the management objective within annual reviews. Support will be available from the HR Business Partners to have these conversations and determine a way forward which supports business needs.
  - 5.4. Managers should be asked to consider a plan for getting their teams to attend the office for the number of days stipulated. They should consider getting teams to attend at the same time to help to build relationships and address some of the behavioural issues we are seeing. This may not always be possible, particularly when staff have alternative work patterns or specific caring responsibilities, but it provides an opportunity to develop better working relationships and for staff to informally learn from one another. Managers should be given a timescale of one month to report this information back to Divisional Senior Leadership Team for discussion and agreement.
  - 5.5. This information should then be passed to Place Services to allow them to ensure there is sufficient space allocation to support those plans. It will be important to ensure that attendance is spread over the full course of the week.
  - 5.6. People Services will continue to refine the learning offer for line managers to help equip them to have challenging conversations and identify the benefits of teams being in the office.
  - 5.7. Consultation with the trade unions will be needed prior to any announcement. It may be worth considering the timing in relation to the current survey Scottish Government is conducting on their hybrid working and also the imminent pay deal announcement.
  - 5.8. If Executive Team approves these actions, members are requested to start these conversations at their next Senior Leadership Team meeting, with the support of their HR Business Partner. Once work has been completed on plans and Place Services has confirmed space allocations, we will work with Communications colleagues to develop the necessary information for staff engagement.



## Governance Tables – To be Completed by Authors

**An Impact Assessment** must be carried out during the development of all new Agency policies and services and when making significant changes to policies and services. The Corporate Assurance team should be involved from an early stage to provide guidance and advice relating to completing impact assessments.

[Impact Assessment Saltire Page](#)

Impact Assessment Queries: [Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot)

Please complete the below table.

Type of Impact Assessment	Required (Y/N)	If No - briefly state reason e.g. Not relevant/Not eligible – agreed with Deputy Director	If yes – briefly state progress to date, highlight any significant issues.
<a href="#">Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</a>	N	Covered in previous work on Our Ways of Working. Reasonable adjustments will be made for those who require them.	
<a href="#">Fairer Scotland Duty assessment</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Future proofing legislation</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Human rights in policy making</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Islands Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)</a>	N	Not relevant	



Before submitting please ensure that you detail how the paper contributes to the Corporate Plan Strategic Objectives below. These strategic considerations should be used to assist you with the content of your paper.

Strategic Objective	Contribution
Helping to deliver a social security system with dignity, fairness and respect.	
Supporting people in Scotland to access devolved benefits that they are entitled to.	
Running our service in a responsible way	Objective of paper is to ensure effective service delivery and optimise utilisation of our central estate.

State here any consultation undertaken in the agency

Strategic Involvement/ Consultation	Input
Service Development	
Data	
Communications	
Business Support Network	
Workforce Planning & People	
Accommodation	Paper to be read in conjunction with separate paper from [redacted] regarding specialised spaces
Finance	
Procurement	
Operations	
Health & Social Care	
Local Delivery	

Please confirm the governance this paper/ information within this paper has been through already, and what the next steps are.

Paper/ Information within Paper Reviewed by e.g. Executive Advisory Body, Non-Executive, Deputy Director for Finance and Corporate Services, etc.		Next Steps after this Meeting e.g. Agency Leadership Team, Executive Team, Executive Advisory Body, etc.	
Reviewed By	Date/ Decision	To be Reviewed by	Date Scheduled
<Deputy Director/ Manager/ Unit Head's Name/ Board/ Group name>	<date reviewed & brief note of decision/ advice>	<Deputy Director/ Manager/ Unit Head's Name/ Board/ Group name>	<date scheduled>
Nicola Rudnicki	25 October 2023		

To arrange a slot at an upcoming meeting of the Executive Team, Agency Leadership Team or Executive Advisory Body, please contact [GovernanceTeam@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:GovernanceTeam@socialsecurity.gov.scot)