

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS WHITLEY SUBJECT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 12TH JUNE 2025

BRUCE STREET

Management Side

Aisling Quinn: Director, People & OD (online)

Debbie Sherlock: NICSHR

Joan Fleetham: People & OD

[REDACTED]: People & OD (Chair)

[REDACTED] (Secretariat)

Central Trade Union Side

Maria Morgan: NIPSA

[REDACTED]: NIPSA

[REDACTED]: NIPSA

[REDACTED]: NIPSA

[REDACTED]: NIPSA

[REDACTED]: NIPSA
(online)

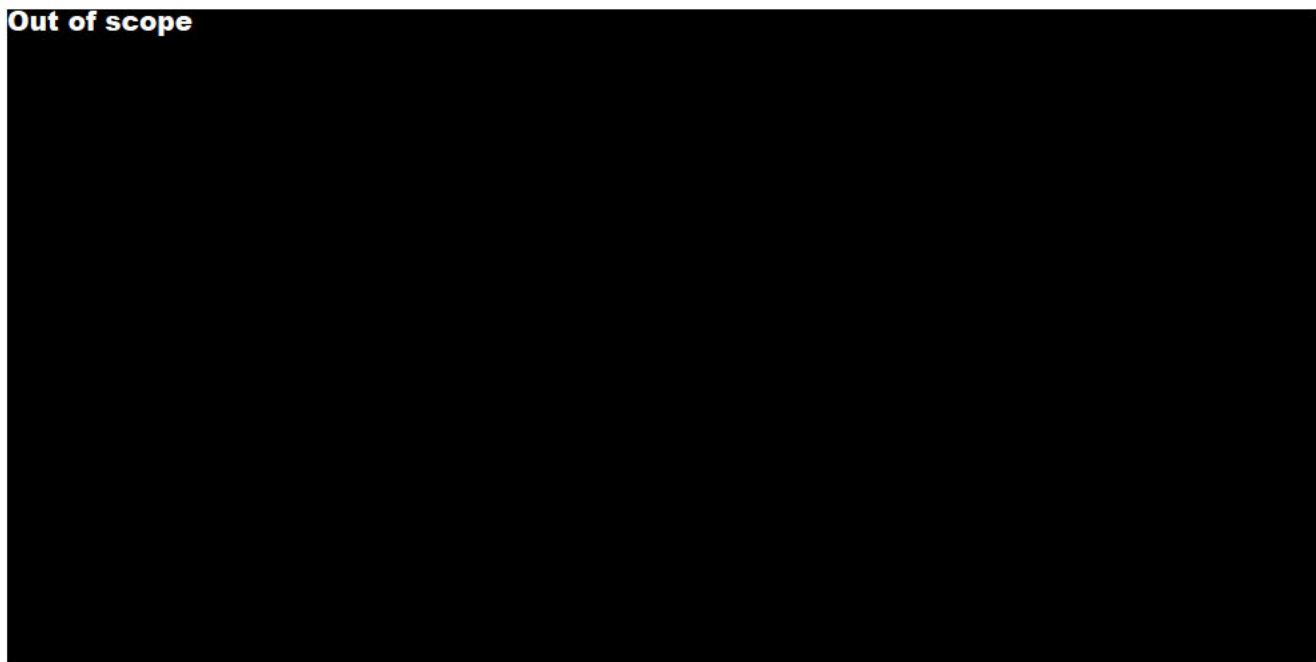
[REDACTED]: NIPSA

[REDACTED]: NIPSA

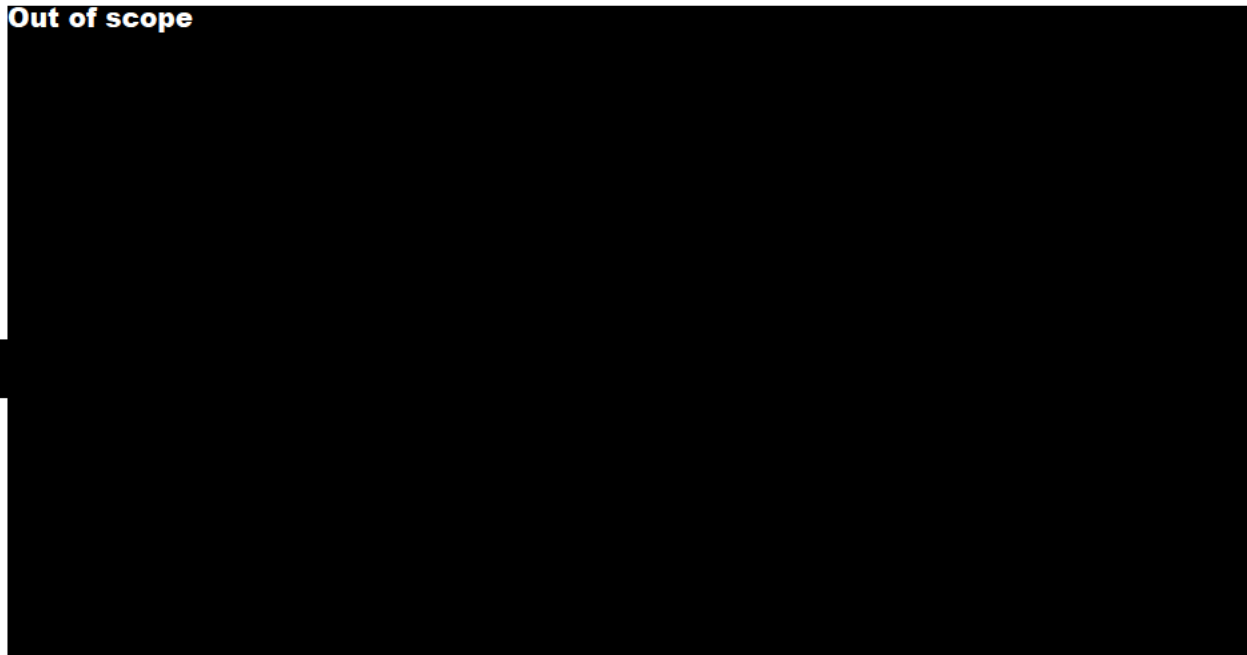
[REDACTED]: NIPSA

Robert Murtagh: FDA

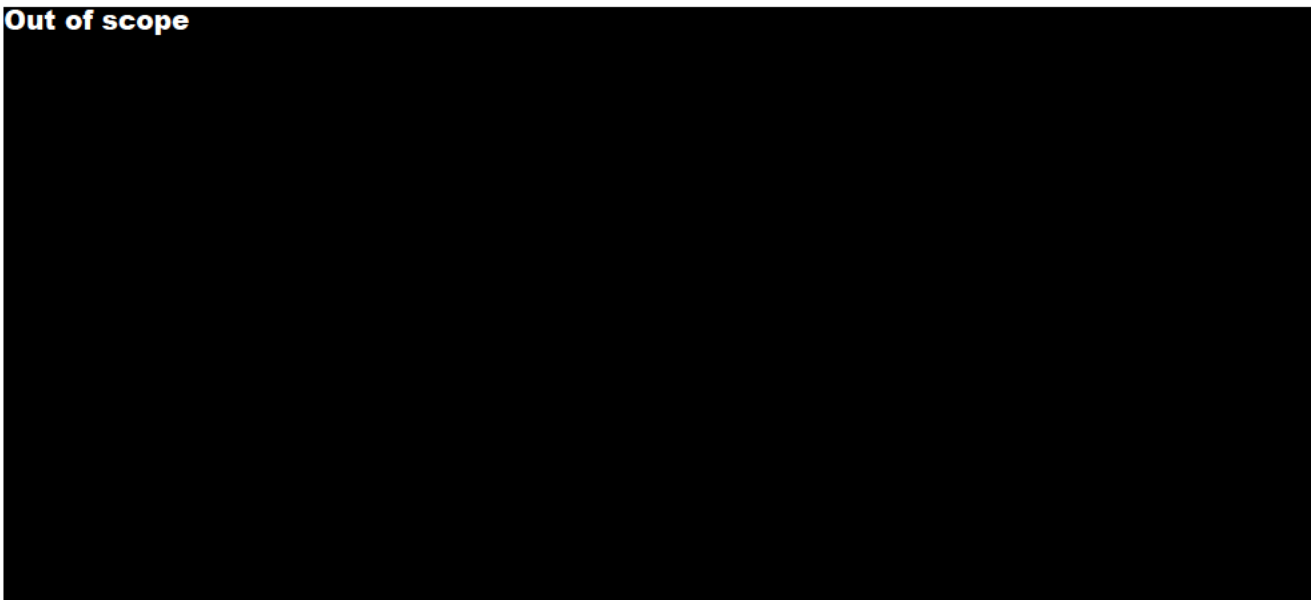
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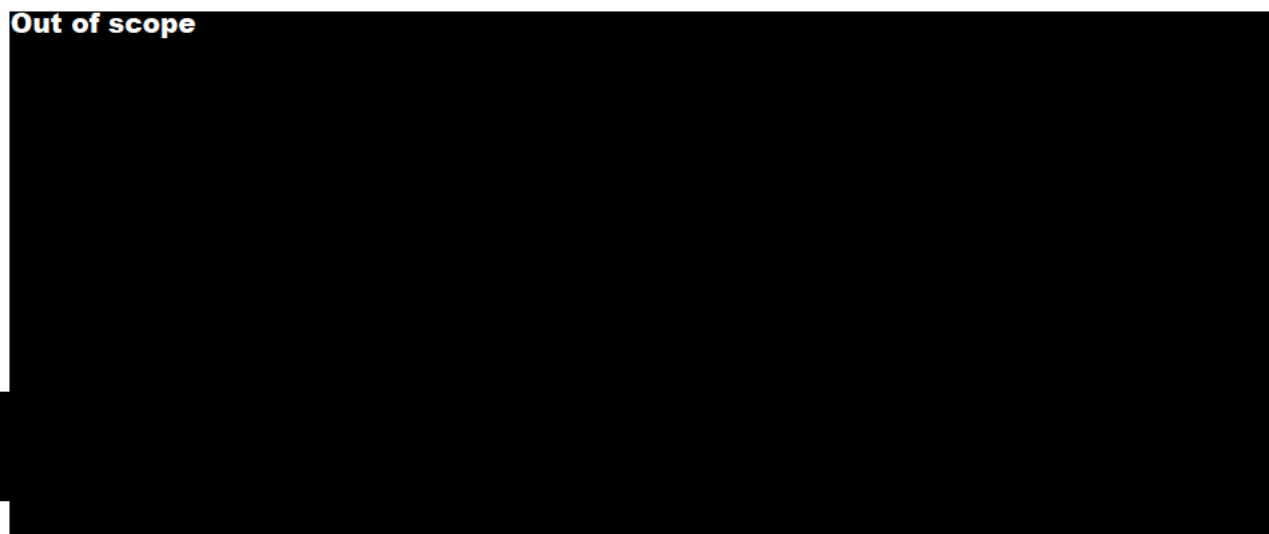
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Hybrid Working policy

10. MS noted that the draft policy had been discussed in detail at the previous meeting in May and that updates have been made to the policy in response to the feedback from CTUS, including the strengthening of DDA wording, clarity on the use of Connect2 hubs (on approval by line manager), and requirement for senior management to explain as well as communicate decisions on attendance requirements.
11. CTUS noted the importance of reasonable adjustments for disabled members and the need for strong communication and education in relation to the employers legal duty. Concern was also raised about how leave days are treated if leave is taken on days when staff would normally attend the office. MS acknowledged the need for clear communication and highlighted draft FAQs includes a question on management of annual leave.
12. CTUS requested clarity on the implementation of the policy and advised that commencement over the summer would be difficult and suggested that the end of October would be more beneficial for their members. MS noted CTUS concerns and undertook to explore the flexibilities and come back on the timeline for implementation.

AP3 – MS to provide clarity on timeline for commencement early next week.

13. CTUS advised that they could not agree to the policy and remained opposed to the mandated percentage office attendance. CTUS explained the need to feedback the discussion on hybrid working to their executive committees and

would respond following those meetings. MS highlighted the need for CTUS to state their position promptly w/c 23 June.

AP4 – CTUS to provide further response regarding hybrid working week commencing 23 June.

14. CTUS agreed with the need for visibility of senior leaders, however, do not agree with wording in policy regarding the need for SCS to attend the workplace more than the 40% minimum requirement. MS stated that they would consider any alternative wording provided by CTUS.


AP5 – CTUS to provide alternative wording regarding SCS attendance over the 40% minimum requirement.

15. MS confirmed that the Permanent Secretaries had been consulted prior to the response to CTUS and had endorsed same. CTUS raised concerns that the implementation of the policy could add to the narrative of the lazy civil servant and that it should be made clear that this is not the driver for the policy change.
16. CTUS noted the MS point on equity but the proposed policy approach does not help those staff who are in roles that require higher levels or full time office attendance. MS responded that it was not for the NICS to fund staff members travel expenses, that office attendance should not be viewed as a detriment or punishment, noting there are many important benefits of being in work.
17. CTUS responded that roles that require full or high office attendance levels should be reviewed to look at the processes and see if more flexibility could be provided or job rotation within teams as stated in the FAQs supporting the current policy. MS responded that this would be an issue for management in business areas to consider.

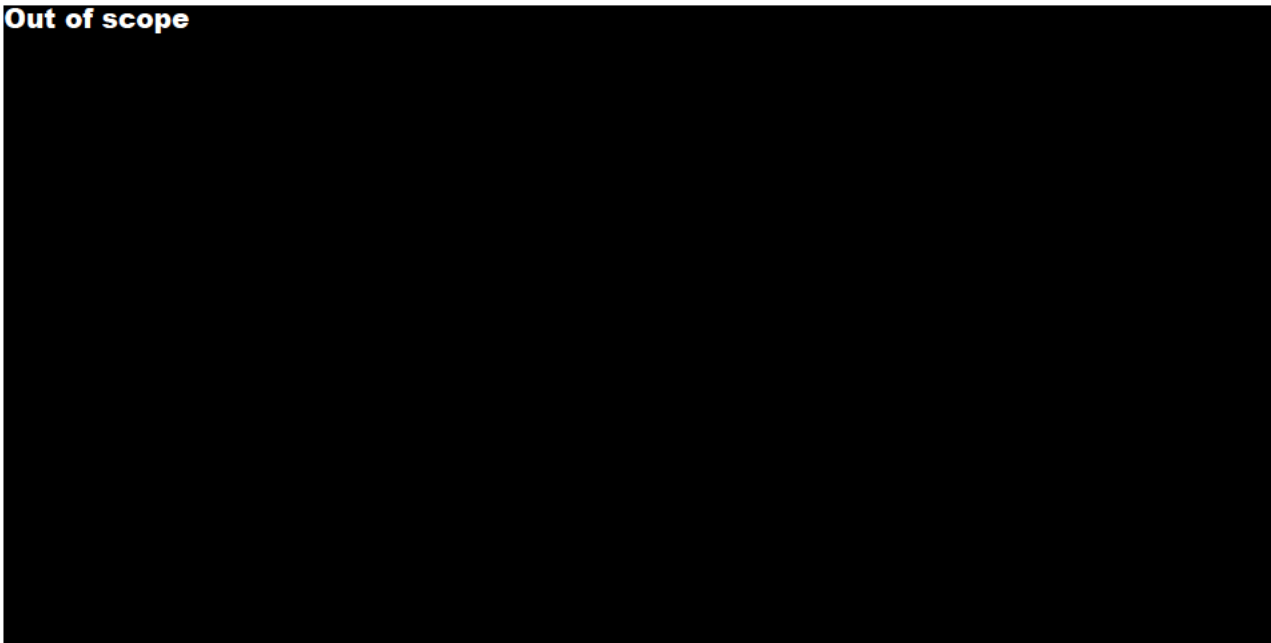
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