

**From:** [Smyth, Sharon \(DoF\)](#)  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [Minne, Jill](#); [Quinn, Aisling \(P&OD\)](#); [REDACTED]; [Hobbs, Niall](#); [McDonnell, Desi](#)  
**Subject:** RE: DESK IMMEDIATE: Hybrid Working Policy - PSS update  
**Date:** 16 July 2025 11:02:58  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.jpg](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

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Thanks [REDACTED] many thanks for the update.

Sharon

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 09 July 2025 14:55  
**To:** Smyth, Sharon (DoF) [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Minne, Jill [REDACTED]; Quinn, Aisling (P&OD) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: DESK IMMEDIATE: Hybrid Working Policy - PSS update  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Sharon,

Further to your email below to Aisling I am writing to advise that at a meeting of the Employee Relations Subject Committee today, CTUS advised that their main concerns centred around multi occupancy of buildings and future workspace requirements. However, they advised they will monitor the situation and agreed no further action is required.

Thank you for your help.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] **HR Policy Branch|People and Organisational Development|NI Civil Service,**  
Bruce Street| Belfast | BT2 7JD  
**Contact:** [REDACTED]



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**From:** Smyth, Sharon (DoF) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 June 2025 17:00  
**To:** Quinn, Aisling (P&OD) [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Minne, Jill [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: DESK IMMEDIATE: Hybrid Working Policy - PSS update

**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Thanks Aisling – apologies – I was typing too quickly and meant to include reference to 'Orchard House' in the last email.

We said at the meeting that no issues had been raised at OH and that NICTS were moving in on a 40% occupancy level.

To get over this point, I think we should ask CTUS to confirm the buildings they believe there will be an issue and we can undertake a piece of work with Accommodation to provide occupation details.

Sharon

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**From:** Quinn, Aisling (P&OD) [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 26 June 2025 16:45

**To:** Smyth, Sharon (DoF) [REDACTED]

**Cc:** Minne, Jill [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: DESK IMMEDIATE: Hybrid Working Policy - PSS update

**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Sharon,

Jill has asked me to follow up on your query below.

During consultation, CTUS has raised Orchard House as an example but has also referred to multi occupancy buildings generally.

CTUS has also indicated that it has raised these concerns at the relevant Whitley subject committee, specifically, its response to the NICS Office Estate divestment plan, where it queried whether the forecasted reduction of 31 buildings / 47% reduction of the in-scope estate could accommodate 40% of the NICS to be in the office on any given day.

CTUS has also raised the proposed reduction in workstations across the NICS estate (i.e. the proposed reduction of c.42% or 16.226 workstations by 2028)- can this reduction accommodate 40% workplace attendance.

Hope this helps and happy to discuss.

Regards,

Aisling

**Aisling Quinn | Director | HR Policy | People & Organisational Development | NI Civil Service**

Bruce Street | Belfast | BT2 7JD

**Contact:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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**From:** Smyth, Sharon (DoF) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 June 2025 15:41  
**To:** Minne, Jill [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: DESK IMMEDIATE: Hybrid Working Policy - PSS update  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Thanks Jill.

On the accommodation point, it would be useful if CTUS could highlight the buildings where they believe that 40% occupation would not work and we can look at this. They mentioned Orchard House to me in the recent CTUS Accommodation meeting in respect of NI Courts & Tribunal Staff who are moving in, however we have not been made aware of any issues with accommodating their staff numbers on a 40% basis.

Thanks

Sharon

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**From:** Minne, Jill [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 June 2025 15:29  
**To:** Gibson, Neil [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Smyth, Sharon (DoF) [REDACTED]; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) [REDACTED]; Quinn, Aisling (P&OD) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Conlan, Ciarrai  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** DESK IMMEDIATE: Hybrid Working Policy - PSS update  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Neil,

Further to queries from Sharon and Katrina (copied) and other queries, about the timeline for implementation of the Hybrid Working policy please see below for you to update PSS tomorrow.

As you know, the “delay” in being able to implement the policy is largely due to CTUS opposition (both NIPSA and FDA ( the SCS union).

It would be helpful if you could provide an update to PSS tomorrow on the current position.

- CTUS (NIPSA & FDA) discussed the hybrid policy at their Executive Committees.
- CTUS (NIPSA & FDA) confirmed on 25 June that it remains opposed to a

mandated percentage workplace attendance requirement in the policy. It considers that a one-size-fits-all approach is not appropriate and does not believe that the current office estate can accommodate a 40% workplace attendance.

- CTUS has asked for consideration of some aspects in the policy, including, clear communication regarding reasonable adjustments; appropriate training for managers; flexibility on workplace attendance to include Connect2 hubs; and a review of the higher workplace attendance requirement for SCS (it is opposed to a higher percentage requirement for SCS staff).
- We are continuing to engage with CTUS to try to resolve these issues.
- In tandem, we have indicated an intended policy implementation date of **September to October 2025**. This will also allow system functionality to support online work style agreements to be operational (which will allow us to have data about the number of staff operating hybrid working arrangements).
- Our Minister would prefer us to try to reach a resolution with CTUS rather than move to impose an unagreed policy.
- Ministerial approval to implement the draft policy between September and October will be progressed – assuming Minister approves implementation of the new policy arrangements our recommendation implementation starts in September and is completed by October.

CTUS has also commented on poor management behaviours in a few departments; examples include where managers are conflating reasonable adjustment requests with hybrid working requests; and refusing to recognise workplace attendance.

Such behaviour is negatively impacting on the consultation process.

Let me know if anyone needs anything else.

**Jill Minne (she/her)**

**Deputy Secretary| People & Organisational Development | NI Civil Service**

2-4 Bruce Street | Belfast | BT2 7JD

**Contact:** [REDACTED]

