

20
YEARS

**BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY
IRELAND**



**THE LEADERS' GROUP
ON SUSTAINABILITY**

Shaping the Future of Work

Perspectives on the Transition
to the 'Next Normal' and Beyond



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1. Executive Summary

Business Context

As we emerge from the Covid-19 lockdown, business decisions are being made about new ways of working that could have lasting impact and, perhaps, unintended consequences.

It is important to reflect on the change that has been accelerated in recent months, to see beyond the headlines and groupthink, and identify what elements of the change are serving us well and are sustainable.

It is also crucial to ask for who are the changes working? Who is being left behind or otherwise at risk?

What ultimately is our wanted vision and how is this reflected in our work culture and in the evolution to a learning organisation, an inclusive workplace, and an environment where the physical and mental wellbeing of all is core to how we do business?

Challenges

The challenge now for responsible business is to take the holistic approach in moving to new ways of working and ensure that what is good for business is good for the worker and for society.

At this time of uncertainty, the challenge is to keep looking outward and not become too insular.

Questioning the future impact of decisions now being made is essential.

1. Executive Summary

Key Insights

Insights that emerged from this project are in some cases backed up by empirical research and in other areas are based on anecdotal evidence. As we are still in the midst of significant change, these insights reflect emerging practices and considerations.

- As some workers return to offices, and other remain working remotely, steps need to be taken to ensure the opportunities to be visible, to network, and to influence, are not dictated by physical working location.
- It is important to read behind the statistics and consult widely in the organisation to understand who is benefitting from current ways of working, and who is at risk? Life-stage is just one key consideration as are individual preferences for introversion over extroversion.
- How will relationship capital develop and thrive in a virtual world? To what extent are we currently reliant on relationships that were developed or supported by physical interactions?
- Businesses who had already prioritised communication and worker wellbeing were able to rely on this trust and goodwill to ensure motivation and engagement during the pandemic. Other businesses realised that this area is critical.
- During the pandemic, *“we’re all in it together”* became a lived experience for many and there was greater sharing of experiences that were previously considered ‘taboo’ in the working environment. Placing the worker at the heart of the business requires that we retain this much of this experience.
- *‘Transversal Skills’* such as critical thinking, resilience, personal adaptiveness/agility and creativity have come to prominence.

2. Introduction

Better Business for a Better Ireland

Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) is a business network for responsible and sustainable business. Our vision is *'Better business for a better Ireland'*.

The **Leaders' Group on Sustainability**, drawn from companies who have achieved the Business Working Responsibly Mark, is a coalition of companies striving to improve the sustainability of the Irish business sector through sharing best practice and creating new ways of doing business. One of the areas the Leaders' Group is addressing is the future of work. The *'Worker of the Future Sub-Group'* was established in 2018 to develop a view on the responsible business approach to the challenges presented by future of work scenarios.

We have been through a period of intense change but many of these changes, such as the normalisation of remote working, were already a feature of working life for many businesses, and a given in future of work scenarios. The pandemic has accelerated and scaled this change, with no business left untouched. The Worker of the Future Sub-Group now sees the need to reflect on the current situation and consider how businesses can keep the worker at the heart of the transition to the "next normal". The group recognises that there will many more such transitions as we navigate through the changes brought by the climate and environmental crisis, globalisation, and the speed of technological change. Some of these changes will evolve over time and some, as we have experienced, will come as a shock.

While many conversations are taking place, along with advice on the re-opening of the Irish economy, it appears the focus has largely been on legislation and formal policies. What is often missing from these discussions is depth on the worker experience and the insights around people and culture. It is this people perspective that the group is now addressing.

In this publication you will hear from the sub-group on its perspectives on four themes: **Culture, Skills, Inclusion, and Wellbeing**. You will also hear how some of Ireland's leading companies, from a variety of sectors, are quite possibly developing best practice in addressing current challenges with a focus on future resilience in the face of ongoing change.

We wish to thank all who have contributed to this publication and particularly to those who have shared their company perspectives.

2.1 Introduction

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group Members

- Melíosa O’Caoimh - *Northern Trust Ireland (Worker of the Future Sub-Group Chair)*
- Marian Curry - *Business in the Community Ireland (Worker of the Future Sub-Group Lead)*
- Audrey O’Mahony - *Accenture*
- Aisling Mooney Eddy - *A&L Goodbody*
- Gillian McMahan - *BT Ireland*
- Bernadette Phelan - *Business in the Community Ireland*
- Davina Christie - *Deloitte*
- Sarah Claxton - *ESB*
- Michelle Cuthbert - *Janssen*
- Kevin Cruise O’Shea - *Musgrave Group plc*
- Noel Gavin - *Northern Trust*
- Mark Brady - *PM Group*
- Niamh McGarty - *Vodafone Ireland*
- Kevin Empey - *WorkMatters*

3. Perspective on Culture

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group

The Worker of the Future Sub-group believes that a successful transition to the *“Next Normal”* will depend on cultural considerations. Its vision is that of a human centric culture for the changing world of work that incorporates the very best principles of inclusion, wellbeing, good work and sustainable skills-based growth and development for all workers.

Culture can be defined as *“a system of shared values and norms that shape behaviours and mindsets within an institution – the unwritten rules or the way things are done around here”* ⁽ⁱ⁾ and with this statement, we can see some challenges for how culture is shaped and maintained in a world where one does not have the same level of physical contact in observing the unwritten rules. Change has been accelerated in terms of the move to a more flexible, remote, and automated environment but there are risks that need to be addressed.

These include:

- Loss of corporate identity and culture
- Feelings of isolation
- Loss of relationship capital

How then do we address these challenges and what principles underpin a human centric culture? The group believes the culture must address business performance, customer centricity and human centricity in a way that is integrated and where positive worker experience is core to successful business performance.

The purpose of these perspectives is not to re-visit what is already considered best and emerging practice in developing and sustaining culture but to look at what have we learned in recent months that is worth retaining as we move into a phase where what’s considered “normal” will have been re-set. What work practices, habits and customs have now become mainstream and should be retained – and what ‘watch -outs’ have we experienced that will need to be addressed as we shape our new ways of working into the future?

There have been many initiatives over the years to encourage people to bring their whole selves to work, in the belief that only by doing so can people become fully engaged. The pandemic forced us to see people in their home environments, juggling family life, interrupted by pets and, according to research, feeling more engaged than ever. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Regular and timely communication with employees, whose needs became centre stage, helped foster a sense of belonging and trust while virtual social groups and wellbeing programmes flourished. There was a concerted effort to build communities at work at all levels in the organisation, which helped to maintain social capital.

3. Perspective on Culture

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group (continued)

Now, as we face decisions on re-opening offices and expanding the remote workforce, it is worth reflecting on the nature of our offices and their purpose in maintaining culture. What is achieved by bringing people together physically that cannot be replaced or replicated online? Some would argue that in many offices, people from different departments will bump into each other, thereby increasing interdepartmental communications and causing the serendipity that can lead to new ideas or networks. How big a factor is this, and how might we create the virtual or blended version of such serendipity?

There are still many unknowns ahead but, as we adapt to ongoing change, we know that whatever this transition may bring it will be imperative to retain regular transparent communication and maintain the two-way dialogue that has worked so well in taking us this far. Reflecting on our pandemic experience, it is worth asking what signs have we seen that a more human and authentic world of work is emerging? We have seen examples of a more mature and honest employment relationship built on principles of genuine partnership, empathy and trust but are there areas where the impact was not so positive? There is no doubt that some lessons will have been learned but a sustainable business commits to learning from experience in moving towards continuous improvement on a business and sectoral level. The next, human phase of work will not just be about gaining technology, financial and economic efficiencies which perhaps typified earlier economic cycles.

In the words of the World Business Council's Peter Bakker;



As companies learn to adapt to our 'new normal', we have seen that technology has played a huge role in enabling business resilience.

Now is the time to shape the future and ensure that it is people centric. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾



The challenge is how we steer through the immediate aftermath of the pandemic while also shaping a more informed, positive vision of work, working culture, and leadership. Perhaps this shock to our economy and society has given us the opportunity to explore what we want from the world of work more radically than we have ever done before?

3.1 Company Perspective on Culture

Electricity Supply Board (ESB)

Starting with Purpose

In recent years, against the backdrop of transformative change in the energy industry, ESB recognising the need to redefine its purpose in a way that is both authentic to the past and relevant to a rapidly changing future, looked to its archive for inspiration. A consistent belief in the role of electricity as an enabler of societal wellbeing provided the stories, insights, and scale of ambition for the company to reframe its purpose in the context of today's global challenges.

ESB's redefined purpose statement – to create a Brighter Future for the customers and communities we serve by leading the secure, affordable transition to a low carbon energy system powered by clean electricity – has set a clear strategic direction for the company, accelerating investment in renewable generation, smart networks and the electrification of heat and transport. ESB's purpose is now fully embedded in its strategy, risk management and investment decisions and forms a compelling framework for collaboration, innovation and investment.

Evolving Culture

In parallel, ESB recognised the importance of its organisational culture throughout its history and the need for it to evolve and enable the organisation to move forward and meet the challenges of a new era, while retaining that which has defined ESB in every key moment, and which remains relevant today and into the future. Using purpose and the stories that bring it to life, past present and future, ESB engaged its employees on a journey to make explicit and articulate the values that have been implicit in everything it does, handed down from generation to generation of ESB employee.

The four values resulting from this process – **Courageous, Caring, Driven** and **Trusted**, work together as a system and define the company's culture. By translating the values into a guide for employees, which describes the values in action, ESB has made a values-led culture tangible for all employees.

A culture transformation program has been built around these values and the behaviours they inspire across a number of focus areas, including Employee Experience, Performance, Inclusion & Diversity, CSR and Smart Working. This programme, **The Way We Work**, is a cross business transformational programme, critical to the delivery of ESB's Brighter Future Strategy.

3.1 Company Perspective on Culture

ESB (continued)

Smart Working

Smart Working in ESB refers to the adoption of increasingly trust-based and digital work practices which enable performance through more flexible and remote ways of working. This was identified pre-COVID as one of the elements of its culture change programme, critical to employee experience, D&I and the attraction and retention of key talent. Despite all the obvious benefits, many managers remained resistant.

COVID enforced remote working has proven the concept and removed the “won’t work here” barrier. Using COVID as a learning opportunity and a means of accelerating transformative change, ESB has put in place a vision, principles and policy, for a Smart Working Future.

From the very outset, ESB has been clear on its motivation and therefore its vision for smart working. The experience of remote working worldwide has led to a narrative on the demise of the office and the significant savings organisations can realise through property savings. In its vision for the future, ESB believes workplaces play a significant role in a positive employee experience.

In a smart working culture, where employees can mix working at home with coming to a workplace, the role of workplaces changes to become the place where people connect, collaborate and innovate, making workplaces critical to inclusion and creativity. This in turn influences how workplaces are designed and equipped to support these activities. ESB has defined its blueprint for a future workplace reflecting its ambition for a smart working future.

3.1 Company Perspective on Culture

ESB (continued)

Smart Working

It was important to ESB that in doing something positive for one area of diversity, it did not create an issue for another. ESB believes its approach to smart working will enable inclusion of many different personal circumstances - for those who need to come to a workplace every day, for those who wish to avoid commuting at peak times, for those who have caring responsibilities and need flexibility and for those who wish to make new choices about home and where they choose to live.

The implication for future recruitment practices is the ability to reach beyond the locations of its offices and into a broader range of communities, which will in turn drive more diversity and social inclusion in the workforce.

A project structure encompassing Smart Working, Workplaces of the Future and Accelerating Digital has been put in place on a cross business basis, to ensure ESB takes the learning from recent months, using it to realise a Brighter Future.

Company Perspective on Culture - ESB Statement



Having a clear vision for the working culture we aspire to, supports us in making choices now that enable this future. COVID will continue to influence our ways of working for some time to come. How long is unknown, but realistically we are looking at many months and quite possibly more. As we continue to adjust and adapt to this evolving context, we have our sights firmly fixed on our vision for a smart working future in a post-COVID world.



3.2 Company Perspective on Culture

Musgrave Group plc

Reflections on the Future of Work@Musgrave

Musgrave's consideration of the *"Future of Work"* was set against the backdrop of a wider organisational transformation programme which commenced in Q1 2020. This programme is designed to ensure that the business is appropriately configured to deliver to its strategic ambitions, which are articulated in the context of a future vision for the business in 2025, the appointment of our new CEO effective from January 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic which started to impact Irish society in February/March 2020. Like many Irish businesses, Musgrave rapidly moved from a situation where the vast majority of its approximately 1,500 office-based colleagues worked in Musgrave office locations to one where these colleagues now work remotely. This initial move, which happened ahead of government guidelines, was taken to minimise the risk to those colleagues ("key workers") who work in the Musgrave Supply Chain and in its Food Retail stores.

Our Story So Far...

Musgrave has been actively considering the Future of Work for the past 4-5 months and the initial catalyst for this was an employee survey that was conducted among those typically office-based colleagues, who have been subject to enforced remote working since mid-March. This survey assessed views on attitudes to remote working and the future of work at Musgrave. Interestingly, it was found that while colleagues were aware of the existing flexible working arrangements, the vast majority rarely if ever availed of them. Most notably, only a very small minority of colleagues indicated that they would like to return to the office on their previous arrangements while an overwhelming majority indicated a preference for a more flexible way of working in the future.

In light of these survey findings Musgrave put together a cross-functional project team to consider what the **Future of Work@Musgrave** might look like in a post-pandemic world. The business also retained the services of external consultants to assist with this work. The Executive Team was surveyed and interviewed in the initial phase and, arising from this engagement, it was clear that there was significant alignment at a leadership level around the requirement for greater organisational flexibility in the future. A plenary session was held with the Executive Team at the end of June and the key takeaway was that this isn't a question about agile working or the future of work but rather a question about what it means to work at Musgrave.

3.2 Company Perspective on Culture

Musgrave Group plc (continued)

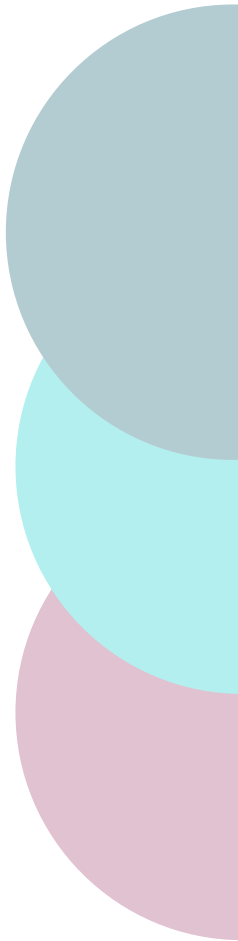
Our Story So Far... (continued)

Engagement continued through July with remote working colleagues and people managers who are now managing remote teams. Through a mix of surveys, focus groups and interviews, deeper insight was gained into the 'who, what, when, where and how' of the work of office-based colleagues. The intention was to report back to the Executive Team at the Annual Strategy & Planning Session that takes place in August.

As the project team worked through these colleague engagement sessions it became increasingly clear that it needed to pivot and frame the question of what it means to work at Musgrave in the context of culture. Specifically, what is the organisational culture required to enable the successful delivery of the 2025 strategic ambitions on the basis that culture is manifest in *'how we do things around here'*.

A very successful engagement focusing on culture was held with the Group Executive Team in August. There was alignment around the concept that in order to bring the vision and purpose of Musgrave to fruition, there is a need to focus energies on the twin tracks of strategic ambition and culture. It is in this cultural context that the programme is now moving to the next phase of exploration and addressing what **Future of Work@Musgrave** means for colleagues around the business.

This will involve further engagement with all colleagues across the organisation (not just those working remotely at present) to ensure diversity of input and the creation of an organisation wide ownership and emotional attachment to a shared vision for our target culture and future ways of working.



4. Perspective on Skills

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group

Following on from the perspectives on Culture, the Worker of the Future Sub-Group believes it is necessary to support the transition to the *'Next Normal'* and beyond through robust and timely (re)skilling of the workforce. The opportunity to support employees through a learner-centric response is a key pillar to both building robust resiliency in the day to day operations of the organisation and in demonstrating and reinforcing the culture of the organisation. Such learner-centricity is vital as the Future of Work continues to evolve and progressive employers will create learning ecosystems with their organisation that go beyond the vocational and job-based training methods of the past. Workers will need to future proof their skills and development over longer but more disruptive career paths.

McKinsey propose that adapting skills and roles to the post-pandemic ways of working will be crucial to building operating model resilience.^(iv) Pre-pandemic, many companies had embarked on the journey to embrace new ways of working via technological advancements and virtual collaboration and the pandemic has accelerated this journey. However, beyond the impact of Covid-19 there is a wider skills crisis that employers, workers, and wider society need to collectively address. Along with the acceleration of digital transformation and automation there is general fragmentation of work as organisations look for optimum flexibility and agility. This means the turnover of jobs and skills will gather pace in the coming years, even more than it has done since the beginning of the 21st century, and sustainable employment must be on the agenda of responsible business.

In speaking with BITCI network members, it appears the skills that really stood out in the weeks and months post lockdown were not the technical skills but the more transversal skills such as creativity, critical thinking and communications. This is not to say that the more technical or task related skills were not essential but the lived experience of remote working raised questions as to the skills and capability to analyse, adapt, and innovate in a remote workplace where all the supports and frameworks, usually enjoyed in the office, became virtual overnight. Leaders were faced with the challenges of rapidly changing business needs and addressing their own skills for leading in a new way. For many of these leaders, overseeing and guiding companies through recent changes required (re)skilling to be able to respond to rapid scaling of remote working and other changes to the operating model. The interconnected skills associated with developing both personal resilience and personal agility were continuously cited for both the short term and the longer-term challenges in the changing world of work.

4. Perspective on Skills

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group (continued)

As we transition from a pandemic response to 'Next Normal', companies are faced with some big questions around how they build future operating models. With respect to training, learning and development, there has been a dramatic shift from the traditional models of **70:20:10** where the 70% (job-related experience) & 20% (working with others) have decreased and the dependency on the 10% (formal training) has grown.

This shift challenges the traditional model of learning within many organisations. With many companies repositioning themselves to move to a new operating model and defining how they build, educate and engage the workforce, we ask what existing best practice should be carried through and what lessons learned from the pandemic need to be highlighted and retained, even championed, in the Next Normal.

We believe the following considerations should be addressed:

- The value placed on non-technical skills and behaviours increased and we need to retain this focus, in addition to ongoing and changing technical/task related capability
- Remote working had implications for all levels in the organisation. Leaders need to be able to act and respond to the way change impacts on both the individual and organisational level
- Organisations with established employee engagement programmes benefited from this goodwill and it helped them to thrive in an uncertain environment
- Traditional learning and development norms need to evolve to a co-owned model, co-led by the learner and supported by leadership and the business

4. Perspective on Skills

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group (continued)

As companies adapt and establish new operating models and define what 'flexible' working looks like we all need to consider how we develop worker potential and build out those capabilities needed as the workplace and the nature of work itself evolves. While our employment, career and training models still reflect 20th century patterns and norms, the 21st century supply and demand environment for jobs and skills will be entirely different in both pace and nature.

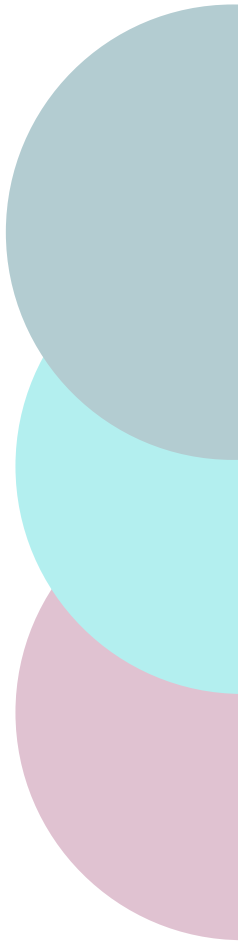
To quote noted learning specialist Heather McGowan;



...in a world of accelerated change, with rapid disruption cycles in industry and with rising automation, that end state of being 'educated' is just no longer meaningful. An individual must have learning agility. ^(v)



To address this current and future trend, we need to reflect on our approach to skills strategy, training methods and to career management itself, and learn from organisations that have already begun that journey.



4.1 Company Perspective on Skills

Vodafone Ireland

Vodafone have long recognised the important role that leaders play within the organisation, particularly in relation to culture change, employee engagement and creating a strong employee connection to the company strategy and purpose. For the last two years the company has focused on becoming a purpose-led organisation with a purpose to *'Connect for a Better Future'* by taking concrete action in three areas;

Digital Society

Inclusion for All

Planet

This has now become their 'North Star' and guides company decision-making as well as enabling leaders to connect with themselves and their teams at a deeper level. All senior leaders participated in a 'Leading with Purpose' programme, which enabled them to embark on a journey of self-discovery, providing insights to how their personal experiences have shaped their personal purpose. The most recent engagement survey showed that their people felt a strong connection to the company's purpose and their work significantly contributed to Vodafone's purpose. In addition, in 2019 Vodafone globally launched their Vodafone culture *'Spirit of Vodafone'*, which promoted the employee beliefs and behaviours which would enable them to achieve their vision as a company.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic Vodafone Ireland quickly recognised that they not only wanted to survive this crisis, but they wanted to thrive beyond it and recognised their strong purpose and culture were critical enablers of this. They recognised the challenges their people were facing, given their workforce quickly transitioned to full-time remote working, with many continuing to deliver above and beyond for the customer whilst balancing caring responsibilities at home.

Early external research in this area suggested that those balancing caring responsibilities as well as more vulnerable groups were being adversely impacted by the crisis. Therefore, the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership team prioritised the safety and wellbeing of their people and recognised the importance of ensuring that their teams felt supported during the pandemic by putting their people at the core of their Covid-19 response plan. Leaders were at the forefront of this plan, where they needed to ensure they provided ongoing empathy, transparency, support, and flexibility to their people in order to create an environment with a strong sense of belonging, connection, and support.

4.1 Company Perspective on Skills

Vodafone Ireland (continued)

Consequently, Vodafone Ireland quickly experimented and learnt fast, a key behaviour within the Spirit of Vodafone, to re-pivot their monthly classroom-based leadership development offering to a weekly virtual development series called **Leaders of the Future Today (LoFT)**. Delivered to 160 of their leaders starting in March this year, the purpose of the sessions were as follows:

- Providing clarity and belief in the company's strategic priorities to lead the business through the pandemic, enabling leaders to personally connect to the strategy and provide clarity to their teams on their critical focus areas.
- Role modelling the importance of leadership during the pandemic. Each session was opened by the Chief Executive who would talk from a personal perspective of her experience during the pandemic, demonstrating vulnerability and humility, and instilling trust within the leadership community.
- Upskilling leaders on critical leadership capabilities to successfully engage and lead their teams through the pandemic. Each session featured an external thought leader on a specific leadership topic, for example: **'Leading through Uncertainty'**, **'Leading with Purpose'** and **'Leading with Spirit'**. This was followed by a panel discussion with senior leaders, who shared how their lived experience as a leader compared to the external insight provided.
- Creating a People Leader Community of Practice, providing leaders with the opportunity to reflect, share learnings and commit to action in a safe space with their peers. This was enabled through cross-functional break-out groups and the leaders found this particularly useful. Moreover, this was a visible symbol of the Spirit of Vodafone behaviour 'get it done together' which emphasises the ability to learn and collaborate with each other.

The Learning & Development team ensured the design was highly iterative, adapting the content and format to the needs of the business, and participant feedback. The sessions were well attended and the feedback was consistently positive with an average net promoter score of 90 and above.

4.1 Company Perspective on Skills

Vodafone Ireland (continued)

The success of the sessions are illustrated by this quote from a leader at Vodafone Ireland, Edel Briody:

“ *In my capacity as Head of Corporate Security and leading the crisis for Vodafone Ireland where we invoked our Business Continuity Plans swiftly and effectively, I was especially pleased how we moved from crisis to opportunity in terms of our leadership journey. Adapting quickly in terms of regular leadership sessions focusing on well-being, re-purposing of resources and future skills helped us as leaders to support our teams during such an unprecedented time. In my view, during a crisis no job is more important than taking care of your team. The leadership sessions helped us as leaders to be open to understanding the team’s circumstances and finding ways to engage and motivate.* **”**

Furthermore, the impact of this development was also evident in the company’s latest people survey results where people leaders were highly engaged and reported high levels of connection to the company’s purpose and Spirit of Vodafone.

The Senior Leadership team has decided to continue with the **Leaders of the Future, Today** series throughout the pandemic. The sessions will be sponsored by the Chief Executive and will be delivered virtually monthly. The focus will be on enabling leaders to lead the organisation to success beyond the pandemic and to build future leadership skills and competencies. There will be a particular emphasis on driving a leadership style built on humility to enable culture change, belonging and inclusion aligned to the future of work. Modules include **‘Enriching Psychological Safety’**, **‘Leading Dispersed Teams’** and **‘Leading with Humility’**.

James Magill, HR Director of Vodafone Ireland commented:

“ *We recognise that organisations that invest in their leaders during times of challenge bounce back better and stronger. Our commitment to our people during this time of unprecedented change has been unwavering and is reflected in the investment that we have made in our leaders to provide them with the skills required for the future success of our organisation.* **”**

4.2 Company Perspective on Skills

Northern Trust Ireland

Northern Trust began to explore the idea of the *'Future of Work'* and the subsequent implications for the *'Worker of the Future'* in 2014/15.

This exploration was in response to the overall corporate strategy which was being developed at the time. The strategy was to take a very 'analog' organisation and to rebase itself to a digitally enabled, data organisation. As to be expected with any complex change program there is an equally complex learning and change management framework required to support employees to not only understand the strategy, but to engage in it so they can ultimately be the greatest lever of change in the strategy roll out.

Since its founding, Northern Trust has been shaped by a deep belief in the enduring principles of service, expertise and integrity. From its roots as a Chicago based trust bank to its global presence today, these principles have served as the foundation upon which the company was built. When designing a learning strategy that is future focused the organisation still looks to its past and to these guiding principles. Using these principles as a framework has ensured that the learning strategy is in step with the broader business.

In designing the learning strategy, the learning leaders within Northern Trust became heavily involved in the overall corporate strategy. To be truly able to understand the needs, the learning functions needed to be completely involved, understanding the change from the core right through the organisation to the ultimate end user, the client.

To truly support the change in the organisation, the learning strategy looked at the capabilities required in the future state of the organisation, then assessed the organisation for the presence of these capabilities, and if present to what depth they existed.

The resulting strategy mapped the capabilities in the following way:

- Existing and strong capability that could adapt and respond to the change
- Existing and fit for purpose now but requiring significant change to be suitable for the future
- Minimal or no evidence of the capability within the organisation now but required for the future success of the organisation

4.2 Company Perspective on Skills

Northern Trust Ireland (continued)

Based on this, learning pillars were devised as follows:

- Strategy in Action
- High Impact Leadership
- Customer Experience Management
- Digital in Financial Services
- Data
- Innovation
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The range of learning for each of these pillars is immense and when factoring in the channels of learning from 'on the job' to certified external programs, the company had to take a multiyear, multi-layer approach to ensuring the organisation and the individuals were not overwhelmed. To deliver the strategy, the program was divided into three phases, **Prepare, Ignite, Transform**, with the program currently moving from Ignite to Transform. The impact of this strategy has been hugely impactful on the overall business. Led from Ireland, the learning strategy was designed and developed in Northern Trust's Dublin and Limerick offices, with a global need in mind. The greatest litmus test for the learning strategy came about in 2020, not because of the great strides in the overall corporate strategy or the delivery of key pieces of technology to clients but because of the global pandemic. Covid-19 was a game changer for the world of work. Northern Trust felt the shockwaves as keenly as most other organisations.

As outlined in the Skills Perspectives section, many companies were on the journey to embrace new ways of working via technological advancements and virtual collaboration. Covid-19 did not create the phenomenon, it amplified its need and rapidly increased the speed of adoption. This was also true for Northern Trust, and the organisation dialled up the speed at which things moved. An interesting finding during the early days and weeks of the pandemic was that while individuals' functional skills didn't vanish overnight because of Covid-19, what did happen was that those with the more transversal skills, such as creativity and critical thinking, adapted faster and had the ability to analyse, adapt, innovate, and to execute more effectively in a remote workplace.

So where are things 6 months later? **Northern Trust still has more than 90% of its Irish workforce working remotely.** The overall strategy and the subsequent learning strategy have been tested as fit for purpose by Covid-19, which inspires confidence in its resilience against other potential future shocks.

5. Perspective on Inclusion

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group shares the vision of an inclusive and diverse workplace that provides access to decent work, with equal access to progression, and where geography is not a barrier.

Inclusion is a broad topic. For this perspective, the group focused on regional and remote worker inclusion and addressed post-pandemic trends that indicate risks of regression in terms of gender equality, and access to employment and progression for vulnerable workers.

The rapid scaling of remote working has opened up the whole island in terms of where many people can work. There has been increased interest among workers to not only work remotely, but to move from large urban areas to more rural locations. While working from home during a pandemic is not fully representative of the experience in normal times, surveys consistently find that many people have benefited from the new work arrangement. A survey from May of this year shows that 83% want to continue to work remotely after the Covid-19 crisis.^(vi) Reduced commute times and more flexibility are most frequently cited reasons for this. These survey results are repeated frequently in the numerous surveys that different companies and industries have undertaken in the last 6 months.

The impact of this emerging trend and the desire that employees have to choose a different way of working is significant in relation to regional inclusion. The uptake of remote work may also be facilitated by the growing number of hubs that have been established across the country with government estimates putting their number at 300.^(vii) The recent Programme for Government has committed to developing a remote working policy to facilitate employees working from home or from 'co-working' spaces in rural areas. The benefit of remote work to the local economy has been identified by the Western Development Commission, among others, who have said it allows individuals a better balance of work and home, and generates and sustains economic activity in rural and regional areas.^(viii) From a business perspective, the potential benefits of reduced real estate needs and the associated costs, as well as access to a wider pool of talent away from more traditional urban centres, may be attractive.

There are, however, downsides to be addressed and a need to understand who in society is losing out from recent changes, such as remote working. In the near term it is likely that many office workers will stay working remotely at least a few days a week, and some on a more fulltime basis. This raises concerns about the potential risks of a **"two-tier"** workforce emerging with greater visibility and networking between those who return to the office environment. To combat this, a conscious approach to inclusion will need to be taken to ensure that those who work remotely have equal opportunities to participate, to be visible and to influence outcomes. One such outcome is the decision to return to the office, to work remotely or have a blended model, and worker engagement will be important in this process.

5. Perspective on Inclusion

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group (continued)

A view is also emerging that current changes are working for those whose careers are already established and who are well-connected but for more vulnerable workers barriers to opportunities, development and career progression are increasing. It is worth noting that in research commissioned by the Fórsa trade union, 86% of respondents were interested in working remotely and 70% of workers found remote working had been a positive or very positive experience. This figure however, fell to 66% for workers aged under 30.^(ix)

Research from the Houses of the Oireachtas acknowledges that while epidemics and other emergency situations negatively affect both men and women, they do so in different ways that are shaped by sex and gender and the socially constructed roles we ascribe to each.^(x) One potential gendered outcome of Covid-19 includes the possibility of lower job productivity among working women who spend more time caring for children, when schools are disrupted for example, which may limit time for paid employment.^(xi) Additionally, one analysis by the Institute of Fiscal Studies 29 found that at the time of shutdown, 17% of female employees were in a sector that was shut down compared to 13% of male employees.^(xii)

Referring to this trend on a global level, McKinsey state that *“without intervention to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women, there’s a risk that progress could go into reverse. This would not just set back the cause of gender equality but also hold back the global economy”*^(xiii)

It is worth reflecting on how entrance to and progression within an organisation is dictated by criteria that put those who have not followed an expected path in life at a severe disadvantage. The rapid scaling of remote working in recent months, within existing processes, has placed the more ‘non-traditional’ candidates at a disadvantage. The experience from the BITCI Employability Programme is that for applicants who need additional support, barriers may be put in place because of real and perceived challenges that arise from the lack of physical interaction that helps in the transfer of knowledge and in experiencing business culture. However, if we strive to have inclusive workplaces this must be over-come. It is important that in challenging times businesses do not become too insular.

Over the summer, some businesses ensured that connections were made with more vulnerable jobseekers and examples of these will follow.

5.1 Company Perspective on Inclusion

A&L Goodbody's Virtual Site Tour

Over the summer months, A&L Goodbody partnered with Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) to provide a virtual tour to BITC clients from EIPC, Women at Work and Ready for Work programmes. Volunteering for community programmes is an integral part of firm's culture and is core to its responsible business practises. Volunteering offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the local community while also gaining a real sense of personal achievement and wellbeing. Unfortunately, the restrictions the current pandemic placed on in-person programmes meant that many of these opportunities were no longer available. The team at A&L Goodbody continued to reach out to their partners to determine what contribution they could make on a virtual basis.

In partnership with BITCI, A&L Goodbody created a virtual programme whereby participants could learn about the law firm and the different types of roles that exist within the firm. The purpose was to provide participants with an overview of the firm, and the opportunity to have more direct advice and guidance from specific functional areas.

20 BITCI programme participants participated in the virtual event, along with 12 volunteers from the firm. Following an initial group presentation, participants joined their preferred break out groups and had a deeper dive into the workings of different departments including – law, finance, marketing, facilities, secretarial, talent etc.

Feedback from the tour was very positive. From a participant perspective, they gained greater insights and connected with experienced professionals in their chosen area of interest. They asked direct questions and learned about career development in these areas. Since the tour, several participants have had individual calls with volunteers to discuss their CVs and receive further guidance they needed. One participant has applied for an open vacancy within the firm.

From a volunteer perspective the feedback was also very positive. Participants were very engaged and curious, and the teams at A&L Goodbody had an opportunity to volunteer and assist within their community. The pandemic focused most people's energy and effort internally, but this partnership gave staff the ability to contribute outside of the firm and to assist others at a time when they most need help. In addition, the team at ALG gained new experience with technology and the format of events and have used this experience in other aspects of their community programmes and across the firm.

5.2 Company Perspective on Inclusion

Deloitte's Time to Talk Programme

Deloitte believes everyone in the organisation should feel they can be themselves at work and have the same opportunities to develop and succeed, based on the value they bring. This is at the heart of the organisation's focus on inclusion. All leaders need to feel confident in dealing with inclusion issues and calling out any behaviour which is counter to company values. The ambition is to lead the way on Inclusion by ensuring all people processes are inclusive, from hiring to promotions. Deloitte wants to break down the barriers and provide more opportunities to people from marginalised communities and in turn making Deloitte a more inclusive workforce and one that is reflective of the diversity within society.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Deloitte has been looking at new ways that it can support the charities it works with and activate the company purpose of making an impact that matters in a new way. As all face-to-face volunteering programmes have come to a halt, Deloitte pivoted its model of volunteering to focus on virtual volunteering.

"Time to Talk" was a pilot programme linking Deloitte volunteers with participants in Business in the Community Ireland's EPIC programme. Through training, career guidance and business inputs, EPIC supports migrants, refugees and asylum seekers living in Ireland to understand the Irish job market and find employment. Since the pandemic, participants reported that their fluency and confidence in English was reducing as they had less interaction with English speakers. Confidence in English is a key skill for finding employment and the *"Time to Talk"* programme was an innovative response to meet this need.

The programme provided the perfect opportunity for Deloitte to enable a virtual volunteering opportunity. It was something that was accessible in more ways than just the virtual benefit as it had a simple focus of making a connection with someone new and helping them with their conversational English, something that can easily be taken for granted. Deloitte decided to offer this opportunity to its group of Audit Interns who had been in the firm for just over a week when the communications were issued. There was a hugely successful response to the call out with almost half of the group wanting to get involved.

5.2 Company Perspective on Inclusion

Deloitte's Time to Talk Programme (continued)

Volunteers met with their participants twice a week for 30-minute sessions to have an informal chat and provide a safe space for participants to practice their English. Sessions were arranged between each pair which meant that they could take place at a time that was convenient for them. Doing this programme virtually made the programme more accessible for people. It also ensured that Deloitte could fully engage with volunteers from across different offices as physical location was no longer a barrier. With a virtual programme, it's just a matter of logging on to make an impact!

Impact

The Corporate Responsibility team at Deloitte truly believe that their volunteers got just as much from the programme as the participants. As it was a pilot programme, the team was eager to gather feedback at the end of the programme and held a wrap-up session with the group of volunteers. The team got some valuable insights and suggestions from the volunteers which they hope to implement. One of the interns had previously taken part in Deloitte's 'usual' intern volunteering opportunity, Impact Day 2019, and he noted that he found this opportunity more impactful and rewarding, reaffirming findings from the Deloitte Millennial Survey with Millennials and Gen Z who want to make a positive impact on the world and expect to their employers to give them the opportunity to do so.^(xiv)

According to Claire Bergin, Senior Manager, Corporate Responsibility:



...the programme has been an opportunity that has come at just the right time for us and a truly positive experience which we intend to continue in the coming months.



5.3 Company Perspective on Inclusion

Hovione's Recruitment Strategy

Creativity driven by diversity is one of Hovione's values along with a firm belief that we can contribute to a better society. Within this area Hovione Cork has actively promoted apprenticeships with our partnership with the Cork Enterprise Training Board and supported gender diversity through our focus on STEM and engagement with IBEC for work placement and training programmes.

Given the nature of Hovione's business in the pharmaceutical sector, the Covid-19 crisis was a very busy time for the company with new market demands placed upon it. The company needed to hire, and to hire in areas where there is a shortage of talent such as Engineering, Manufacturing, Quality and Health & Safety. Accessing these skills is key for continued growth and innovation. For Hovione, there was a need to look for talent beyond the more traditional routes. Towards the end of 2019, Hovione had a series of workshops and training sessions with AsIAM, who work to deliver real inclusion and understanding for the autism community in Ireland. This training was aimed at middle and senior management to broaden the team's knowledge base on autism, with all other team members benefiting from the sensory exhibition that AsIAM use to simulate the real-life experience of people with autism.

AsIAM also conducted a full audit of Hovione's working areas and accredited us with an *"Autism Friendly Workplace"* certificate.

When demand was increased as result of the pandemic, Hovione reached out to Specialisterne, who specialise in the recruitment of people with neurodiverse challenges, to identify talented people for some key roles. As Eanna Cantwell, HR Business Partner, puts it;

"We thought we had exhausted all avenues with our recruitment strategy but it opened our eyes to the untapped talent pool which the company needed in order to reach its short and long-term goals."



While inclusive employment has long been one of the focus areas for Hovione, the Covid-19 crisis brought home to the company how these efforts have paid off. As Dr. Paul Downing, General Manager, explains;

"...engaging with Specialisterne and AsIAM has broadened the pool of talent available to us to enable faster scale up and greater diversity of talent across our teams thereby enriching and strengthening the work environment". We have concrete examples of how a committed focus to inclusion has been good for our business and we now have a goal to promote neurodiversity amongst our workforce."



6. Perspective on Wellbeing

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group

The pandemic turned many people's lives upside down and we are not yet aware of the extent of the impact on physical and mental health. A survey of adults in Ireland conducted by Mental Health Reform in collaboration with The COVID-19 Psychological Research Consortium (C19PRC) found that over half of participants (51.3%) reported that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative or very negative impact on their mental health and general wellbeing.^(xv) Findings like these will require a response from every sector of society.^(xvi)

In the workplace, a key learning from recent months was the positive impact that empathy and regular communication from leadership had in keeping people engaged at a time of uncertainty. Worker wellbeing has become a critical concern and has been elevated within many organisations during the pandemic. Early research pointed to the emergence of the CEO as Chief Empathy Officer setting the tone at the top, ensuring worker wellbeing became a priority, with trust becoming *"the new business currency"*.^(xvii) The mantra to look after your employees and they will look after the business was never in more evidence.

Workers in various sectors have been called upon to be flexible, agile, and to go that extra mile. Those on the frontline have had to protect themselves in the work environment in a way they never envisaged. Workers have been brought into the frontline from other parts of their organisations and have adapted to a much-altered environment. With so much being asked of people, wellbeing became critical.

The focus on physical and mental wellbeing is one to retain as we look to the future and steps should be put in place to ensure wellbeing remains front and centre. It is important to note the concerns among workers in every sector about risks to employment and financial security. Additionally, we need to be mindful that thousands of young people leaving school and college are entering the workforce at a time of recession. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has stated that the economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic *"will have significant consequences for people's [mental] health outcomes in the short and longer term"*.^(xviii) The pandemic has also highlighted that people are at risk of being marginalised or isolated in ways that they would not have anticipated.

6. Perspective on Wellbeing

The Worker of the Future Sub-Group (continued)

On a more positive note, there is anecdotal evidence from BITCI members that the pandemic opened a space for people to share their vulnerabilities and that *“we’re all in this together”* became a lived experience and not a cliché. Not being okay, and discussing this openly, became normalised. Compassion, care, and openness need to be the foundations of the future of work and become embedded in our way of working. While tools and training will be required for those responsible for teams, wellbeing is something that everyone in the business has responsibility for in terms of creating a positive and caring environment.

We have seen both positive and negative impacts from the increase in remote working. The positives include the removal of the morning commute and the flexibility remote working provides. Initially, there was a spike in productivity and less absenteeism, but this is changing as the long-term sustainability of this way of working comes into question. The downsides that are emerging include the increased “invisibility” of people as contact may be reduced to purely transactional work calls without the added awareness provided by physical cues. Loneliness and the inability to switch off have also been cited as difficulties in maintaining positive wellbeing. Perhaps the tight blending of home and work means that people go straight from one to the other without experiencing that ‘liminal space’ where we can distance ourselves from work before engaging fully in personal and home life.

We also need to consider how life-stage and circumstances impact on how someone experiences regular and sustained remote working. The experiences of a young person starting their first job in relative isolation will be very different to someone working while caring for others in the home while for other groups, remote working is ideal and a key retention tool. Employers will need to consider their remote working set up and wellbeing programmes as a means of attracting and retaining staff. At this time of transition, engagement with workers about the changing workplace is vital. A one-size fits all approach is not advised.

6.1 Company Perspective on Wellbeing

Accenture: A People-Focused Response to Remote Working

Like most other businesses, Accenture needed to quickly pivot its workforce to remote working when COVID-19 reached Ireland. When the crisis hit, Accenture's focus was on the safety, health and well-being of its people in a remote working world.

According to Accenture's Director of HR, Lisa Rose:

“*Our number one priority as a business was and continues to be our people. As a global organisation of over half a million people, we were already using technology-based collaboration tools very effectively, but working remotely from home on a sustained basis for many of us was new. We understood that for many of our people, it presented challenges. As a leadership team, we quickly needed to look at how we could adapt and support our people through this rapid period of adjustment, so they felt truly connected and part of the Accenture community despite being apart.*”

Accenture's Approach to Wellbeing

Supporting the wellbeing of its people has always been a significant pillar in Accenture's business strategy, championed by its new **People Crew**. This team is led by people on the ground and lives in every part of the business. Their purpose is to support the breadth of the employee experience, spanning important areas including inclusion and diversity, volunteering, sustainability, knowledge sharing and learning, recognition, mental health and wellbeing.

At the onset of the pandemic, this team quickly supported Accenture's leaders to refocus and refine their approach to wellbeing in the new normal. It has become front and centre through an internal campaign called '**Let's Get Virtual, Virtual**' .

6.1 Company Perspective on Wellbeing

Accenture: A People-Focused Response to Remote Working (continued)

A People-Focused Campaign

With such a large team of employees spread across the business in Ireland, this campaign was designed to help communicate with everyone and highlight the tools and resources available to them.

Accenture understood that regular communication was vital, to limit the isolation that people can feel, to continue to embrace a sense of community, to feel valued and to fill the face to face void. Listening, a key leadership behaviour, was one of the main success factors. The campaign team surveyed employees, hosted virtual focus groups and engaged People Crew throughout the business to understand what was needed at every level.

In her role as Director of HR, Lisa has been communicating directly with employees via email and live webcast as part of the *'Let's Get Virtual, Virtual'* campaign. She used her personal remote working experience to bring those communications to life – talking about her good days and bad days, sharing her personal highs and lows. The feedback was resoundingly positive; her emails are described as relatable, human, and honest.

Mind. Body. Balance.

Accenture recognises that wellbeing is unique to the individual's own circumstances. The company's ethos is to offer choice, flexibility, and encouragement, focusing on mind, body, and balance to enable its people bring their best selves to work, even from home.

Mind.

The People Crew developed a suite of offerings to go hand in hand with Accenture's long standing Mental Health Ally programme where hundreds of employees across the business have been trained to listen, acting as a trusted 'go to' for people seeking support and information on mental health. In addition, the team scheduled webinars and calls to assist with a host of anxieties related to remote working including: 'working from home with kids', 'managing a remote team', as well as 30 minute counselling sessions, a series on resilience and a mindfulness programme.

6.1 Company Perspective on Wellbeing

Accenture: A People-Focused Response to Remote Working (continued)

Mind. Body. Balance. (continued)

Body.

To enable physical health while working remotely, Accenture invested in a range of weekly fitness offerings for its people. Each week there is virtual access to scheduled classes such as Pilates, boxing, high intensity interval training (HITT) classes, as well as seminars on nutrition and goal setting.

Balance.

Listening to feedback and personal experiences, Accenture has learned that a common issue related to remote working is difficulty 'unplugging' as the home environment has become the sole location for work, family, sleep, and relaxation. The company also discovered a social collaboration void, with some teams missing out on the social aspects of their job, and the ability to build relationships. Team quizzes, virtual social evenings and webinars on 'switching off' are some of the initiatives they have introduced, as well as encouraging people to use their volunteering hours virtually through the company's Corporate Citizenship Programme.

This is a moment for employers to shine and gain trust, a chance to demonstrate inclusivity, kindness and support. It is also an opportunity to harness the culture of openness and sharing that has emerged, highlighting the fact that we really are all in this together. Accenture's approach to remote working has been agile, feedback driven, and people centric. Wellbeing has been at the heart of Accenture's approach and will continue to be as the company, like everyone else, adapts to the never normal.

6.2 Company Perspective on Wellbeing

Momentum Support

As a company, Momentum Support has always recognised that investing in people is crucial to the success and sustainability of the business. Workplace Health and Wellbeing is a state of being, which supports each employee in reaching and maintaining their full potential within the workplace. Over recent years, the company has accelerated its focus on health, safety, and wellbeing throughout the whole of our organization and allocated additional investment to partnering with specialist providers.

Given the nature of its business, there is a strong focus on Health and Safety at Momentum Support and specific Covid-19 measures were put in place to address safety such as Covid-19 Safety Bulletins and Covid-19 Return to Work Induction.

However, during the pandemic one of the key learnings for Momentum Support was how the ethos of 'we're all in it together' became a lived reality and, according to CSR and Quality Manager Verona Pentony;



Covid-19 created a space for people to talk and normalise what may have been taboo or side-lined in the past.



It became okay to talk openly about bereavement, stress, and health issues. In reflecting on this, it appears that the tools and programs that had already been in place at Momentum Support created organisational resilience that supported all levels in the company in dealing with the pressures of being a front-line business during a pandemic. This short article will focus on some of these initiatives and programs.

Health Assured

- Health Assured is a confidential support which is available to everyone, and dependent on the nature of the issue, counselling or information services can be provided by fully qualified professionals. This is offered to all employees 24 hours per day and includes support for the employee's dependents.
- Health Assured also launched an APP for all employees that includes a Wellness Tracker and Weekly mood tracker, along with webinars on wellness.

6.2 Company Perspective on Wellbeing

Momentum Support (continued)

Employee and Manager Workshops on Mental Health

Workshops were organised to build awareness of how thinking impacts mental health and support people to take responsibility for their mental health and know how and when to seek help. These sessions create a common language around mental health in the organisation making it easier for people to be open and seek help when they are struggling. Managers explore how to open the conversation around mental health, how to support team members and reduce stigma in the workplace and the relationship between mental wellbeing, employee engagement and increased productivity.

In addition to these workshops, webinars addressing mental health are available to all stakeholders in conjunction with charity partner *“Suicide or Survive”*. To support wellbeing, the Life Balance module was launched 11th May 2020 and Facing virtual Team Challenges (How to Work Effectively with Colleagues in the New World).

Communication

Clear and regular communication is a vital component to support employee’s wellbeing and was adapted to address the challenges of the pandemic crisis. Below are some examples of the approach taken at Momentum Support:

- **Connect Newsletter** was introduced in 2019 to support Momentum Supports journey towards becoming a responsible and sustainable business. It is a vehicle to communicate company news including working Group activities including the Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group.
- **Connect Weekly** was introduced during COVID 19 including a Heart to Heart with the Editor to create an open forum where people shared on-site, frontline working experiences. It also included updates from the EAP programme from Momentum Support’s charity partner Suicide or Survive (SOS) who presented a range of tools to support Wellbeing such as The Wellness Continuum; a scale that shows peoples level of wellness, from a low to a high level. The ethos of Connect Weekly is that ‘we are all in this together’ and this became a reality during the lockdown.
- **Microsoft Teams** was installed across Ireland/UK to regularly support Team meetings though the online platform.

6.2 Company Perspective on Wellbeing

Momentum Support (continued)

Communication (continued)

- **Employee Hub;** A section specifically assigned for employee sharing on the Momentum Support Website. During Covid-19, snap-shots were shared to highlight life situations for example, images of empty streets.

Acknowledgement that everyone is playing their part

Ensuring key behaviours, values and principles are embraced and nurtured from the most senior staff within the organisation is a consistent priority.

From the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, as we entered a world of unknown, internal communication was high on the agenda to ensure regular updates were communicated to everyone throughout the organisation in a timely fashion. This included setting up weekly coffee & chat forums with Ian Anderson, Group Chief Operating Officer and HR Director, Alana Dunican, and written communications to staff directly from Ian, recognising the challenges faced and thanking everyone in the Momentum Support for their hard work and ongoing support to the organisation.

A key message to those on the frontline was reassurance that *“everyone is playing their part behind the scenes in supporting you all. We are all people and we are in this together, regardless of role or title.”*

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Business in the Community Ireland is a movement for sustainable change in business. In a dynamic and changing environment, sustainable businesses are successful businesses.

Our purpose is to inspire and enable businesses to bring about a sustainable, low carbon economy and a more inclusive society where everyone thrives. We act as trusted advisers in sustainability and corporate social responsibility. We provide access to best practice and support businesses with practical management and monitoring systems. By facilitating forums for reflection and action, we ensure that businesses anticipate and are ready to meet the current, pressing challenges of climate change, the pipeline of talent as well as the issues of social inclusion, diversity and accountability.

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