Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface
Enabling your staff to work from home

You should be thinking about **how** your staff will work at home and you will need to provide any equipment they need to best perform their job.

You will need to consider tech hardware (laptops/phones/etc.), connectivity (wi-fi & data) and the comfort of their workstation.

Three key actions
- **Provide hardware**
- **Check staff have suitable, affordable and secure connectivity and data**
- **Ask staff to complete a workstation self-assessment and act on any issues raised**

Hardware
Your team should ideally be using dedicated tech hardware, for example computers and phones. These should be provided and managed by your organisation. This makes it much easier to keep up with security settings and ensure employees can run the software and apps they need to do their job.

A basic Windows laptop or Chromebook can start from about £250-300. If your charity is able to join the Scottish Public Procurement portal, you can get high-end HP laptops for just £600. This is about half the cost of a similar machine on the high street. Kitting out a whole team with new hardware can be expensive – but forcing your team to work on unsuitable devices is likely to lead to stress, low productivity and insecure working practices.

If some or all of your staff team have to use their own devices, think carefully about the security implications. You should agree a 'Bring Your Own Device' policy to cover this situation.

Key points are:
- Ensuring device software is kept up to date, especially antivirus and malware software
- Ensuring that employees use a separate user account for doing work-related tasks
- Doing as much work as possible 'in the cloud' so that data is not stored on the local computer
- Ensuring staff work safely and securely

Connectivity and data
You will need to ask your staff if they have access to a secure internet connection, for example password protected home broadband. You will also need to check their internet connection is reliable, especially for staff who live in rural areas. A mobile phone with a tethered hotspot is a good temporary backup – but staff need to be aware this will use their mobile data.

If necessary, you could help your staff navigate options for cheap broadband or provide MiFis. These are compact, wireless devices loaded with data providing a mobile broadband connection. If necessary, you could seek funding to help buy these, either by pitching to your Board or applying for a grant.

Workstation setup
You must give consideration to how your staff will setup their workstation to work from home, ensuring they stay healthy and do not suffer from strains or injuries. Ask should ask staff to complete

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a workstation self-assessment and you should act on any issues raised. This might mean you provide them with a suitable chair, screen or lighting.

You should also give consideration to any privacy required due to the nature of their work, for example virtual private networks, computer privacy screens or backgrounds on video calls.