

The Challenge

Sandwell MBC had decided to embark on a journey towards agile working and had already decided that agile working would contribute to reaching the council's business objectives:

"Sandwell Council are working towards becoming the employer of choice, creating real opportunities for the local community, and able to deliver a first class customer service.

Agile working is a philosophy that introduces a system of work that allows for the flexibility of where and when work can be carried out."

They had a wide-ranging view of what effective agile working would necessitate. This included a working environment that would facilitate collaborative working, based on strong, fair management culture as well as a common ICT platform, which includes mobile technology and remote access to networks.

The Solution and Benefits

There was a strong driver to rationalise and modernise the existing office accommodation and a new building, Jack Judge House, designed to accommodate approximately 300 employees working flexibly was close to completion.

We were asked to support the move to Jack Judge House by helping to create a culture to enable new ways of working, ensuring the best impact for employees and customers. This involved:

- Advising and supporting the project leader.
- Working closely with a multidisciplinary project team to build a powerful scenario of the future world of agile working and the advantages this could bring. The outcomes from this were built in to future thinking about the roll out of agile working beyond the immediate demands of the move to Jack Judge House.
- Designing and delivering a series of workshops to enable managers to be more effective in the new working environment as well as workshops for staff who would need to adopt different behaviours in a world of shared space, desk sharing and new common areas. A strong focus was finding ways to maintain team effectiveness and spirit when larger numbers of people were working remotely.

Further work beyond the Jack Judge House move involved leading short sessions with teams of senior managers to identify the culture needed for success and beginning action planning to adopt agile working as appropriate to their business needs.