COVID-19 Staff Survey Results

December 2020

Executive Summary

Introduction

As a responsible employer, we understand that adjusting to life in a global pandemic may be difficult for our staff. In order to gain a broader understanding of how our staff have been affected during this time of uncertainty, a survey was carried out across the organisation between June and July 2020. A second survey was conducted during November 2020 to understand the current views of staff, and how they may have changed eight months into the pandemic. This report presents the key findings of the second staff survey, including direct comparisons to the first survey, which can be used to help inform how best we can support our staff and how we might move forwards as an organisation.

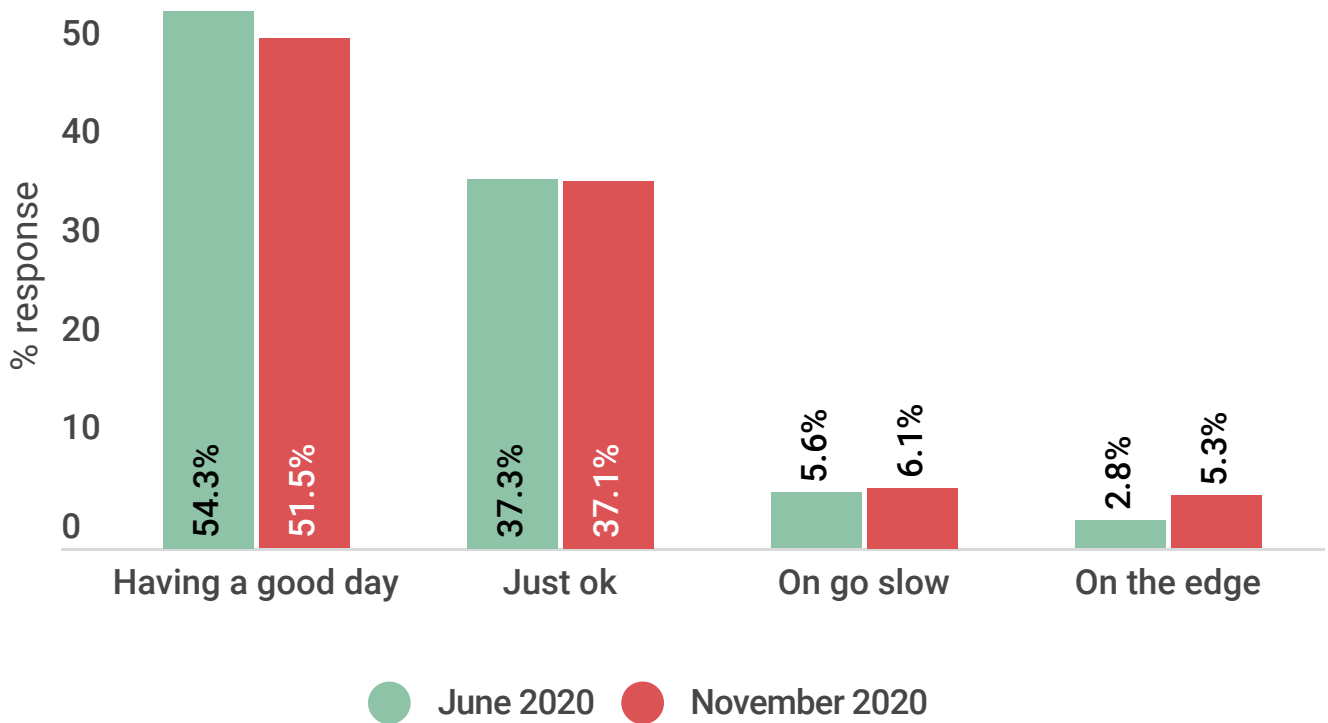## Overall Summary of Results

Although the response rate was slightly lower than in June, the second survey was well received, with an overall response rate of 61.4% or 132 responses (compared to 73.7% or 177 responses previously). In summary, the vast majority of staff continue to feel well supported by their manager; Management Team are trusted to make decisions in the best interests of staff and staff feel that the right amount of information is being disseminated across the organisation. Staff overwhelmingly feel that the Council is doing everything it possibly to can to support them, with initiatives such as the Steps Challenge cited as something that has been hugely beneficial to mental wellbeing and something which staff would like to see return after Christmas.
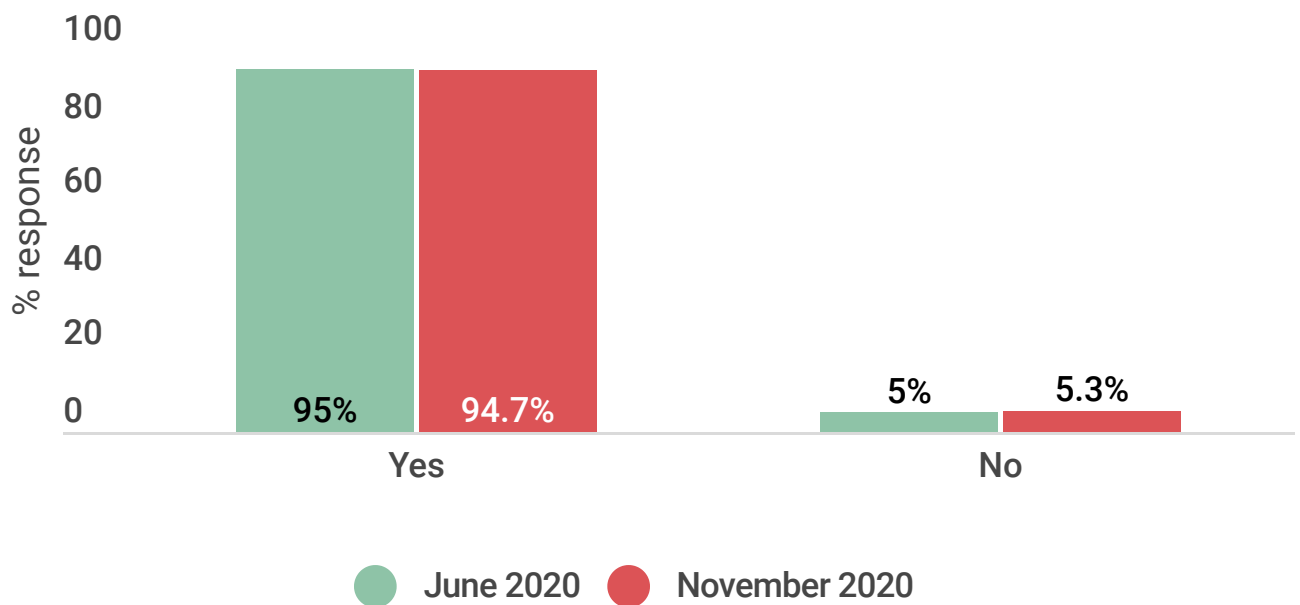
There are key differences between the two surveys:

- More staff are reporting adverse impacts on their mental health now compared to June, with a higher number of people also worried about the impact of COVID-19 on their lives. .
- More staff reported feeling very or fairly satisfied with their working from home arrangement now compared to June, though network connectivity and a lack of physical workspace remains a persistent issue for some.
- A higher percentage of staff have settled into a regular working routine and are working more productively now compared to June.
- Childcare and caring responsibilities appears much less of an issue than in June, though concerns remain about school closures and the impact this would have on working from home.
- Limiting hotdesking, the availability of a vaccine, staggering start and finish times and improved cleaning regimes would all make staff feel more comfortable about returning to the office.
- Fewer people want to see a return to the office with more respondents preferring to work from home with scheduled office time now compared to June.
- An increase in people's workload and feeling under pressure as a result has emerged as a new issue with this being the single biggest work related concern that staff currently have.
- Social isolation and missing social interaction in the office remain the biggest reasons why staff are missing the office environment.
- Conversely, noise and distraction remains the single biggest thing that staff are not missing about working in the office.
- More staff report enjoying the flexibility and work/life balance that working from home brings now compared to June.

Survey Results - Mental Health and Wellbeing

Q1. How would you rate your mental well-being right now?

% response

	Having a good day	Just ok	On go slow	On the edge
June 2020	54.3%	37.3%	5.6%	2.8%
November 2020	51.5%	37.1%	6.1%	5.3%

● June 2020   ● November 2020

Q2. Do you feel connected to your team?

% response

	Yes	No
June 2020	95%	5%
November 2020	94.7%	5.3%

● June 2020   ● November 2020

Survey Results - Mental Health and Wellbeing

Q4. Do you feel supported by your line manager?

Yes
- 95%
- 97.7%

No
- 5%
- 2.3%

● June 2020   ● November 2020
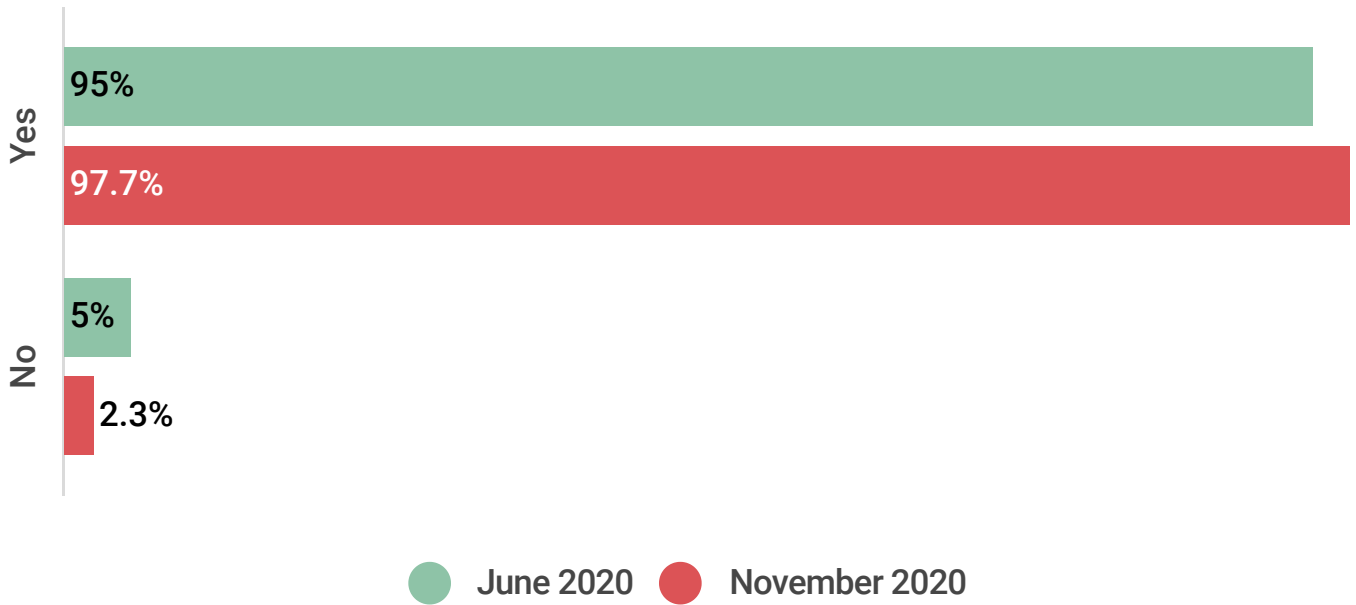
Q6. How worried are you about the impact of coronavirus on you personally?

% responses

	Not at all worried	Not so worried	Somewhat worried	Very worried
June 2020	10%	36%	47%	7%
November 2020	7.6%	26.5%	54.5%	11.4%

● June 2020   ● November 2020
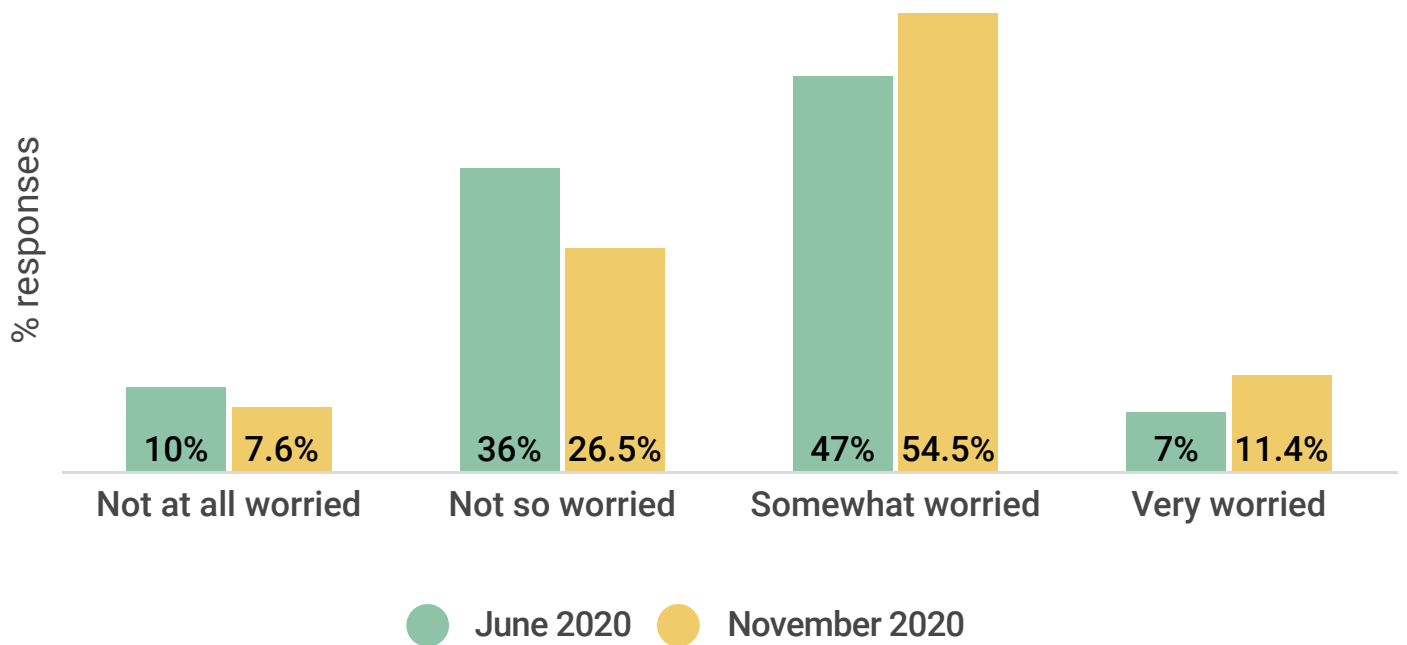
Survey Results - Mental Health and Wellbeing

Q7. What can we do as an organisation to better support you with your mental health and wellbeing? This was an open ended question with responses grouped into the categories below. Whilst the answers remain broadly similar to last time, staff no longer have concerns about limited social interaction with colleagues. Job security also didn't feature as a concern this time round.

The majority of respondents feel that the Council is doing enough to support staff and want this level of support to continue. Of these respondents, the comments were overwhelmingly positive about initiatives such as ONE and the Steps Challenge which staff would like to see return after Christmas as it proved to be a boost to mental and physical health.

Continue with everything you have been doing so far
49

Nothing - I am fine
18

Better recognition of the pressures staff are under
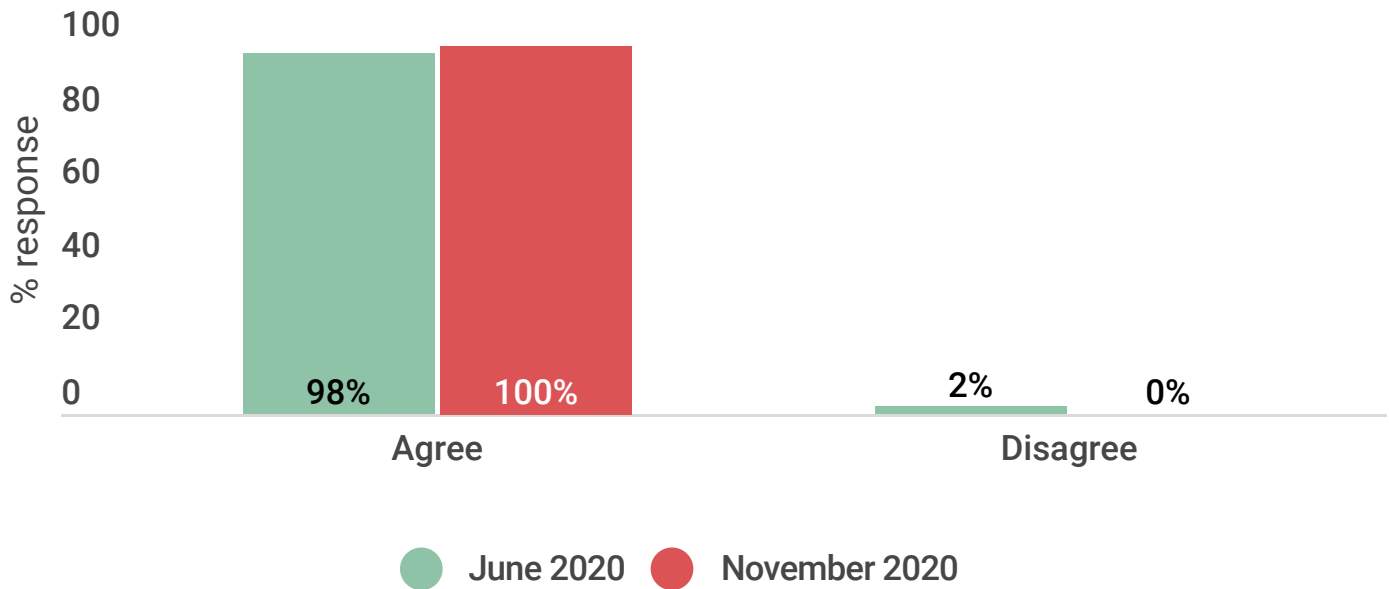6

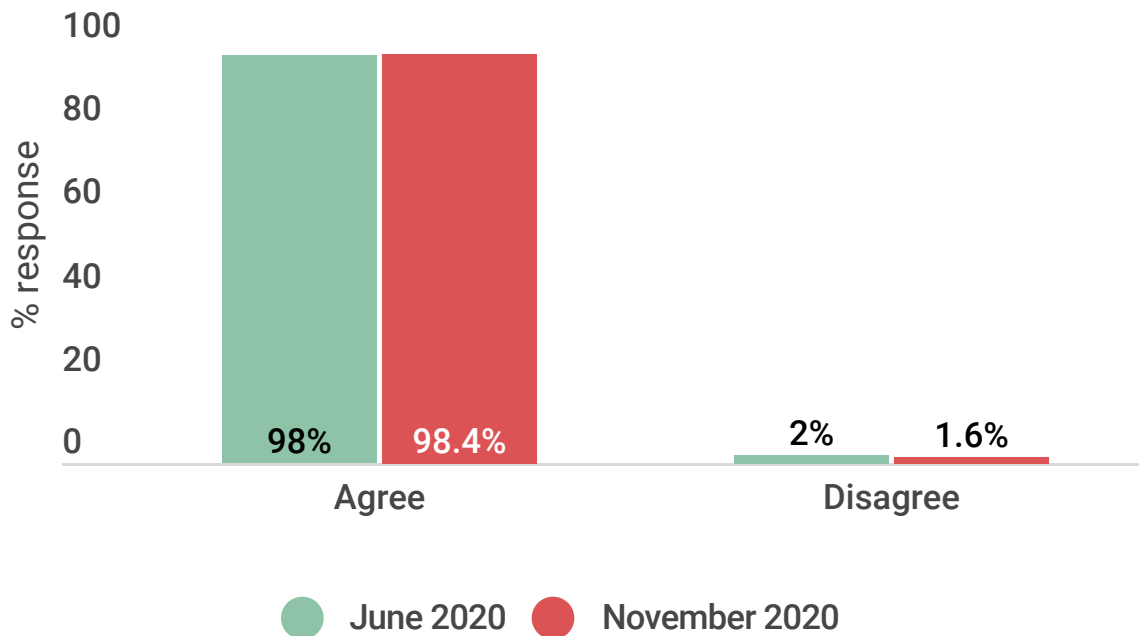## Improved mental health support
3

Non-work related worries
2

Survey Results - Leadership and Communication

Q8. Do you agree or disagree with the statement "I trust Management Team to make decisions that protect me and my colleagues?"

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the statement "Management Team visibly displays and role models the behaviours they've asked of us?"

Survey Results - Leadership and Communication

Q10. Do you agree or disagree with the statement "I am receiving the right amount of information during the pandemic?"

% responses

	Agree	Disagree
June 2020	99%	1%
November 2020	99%	1%

June 2020   November 2020
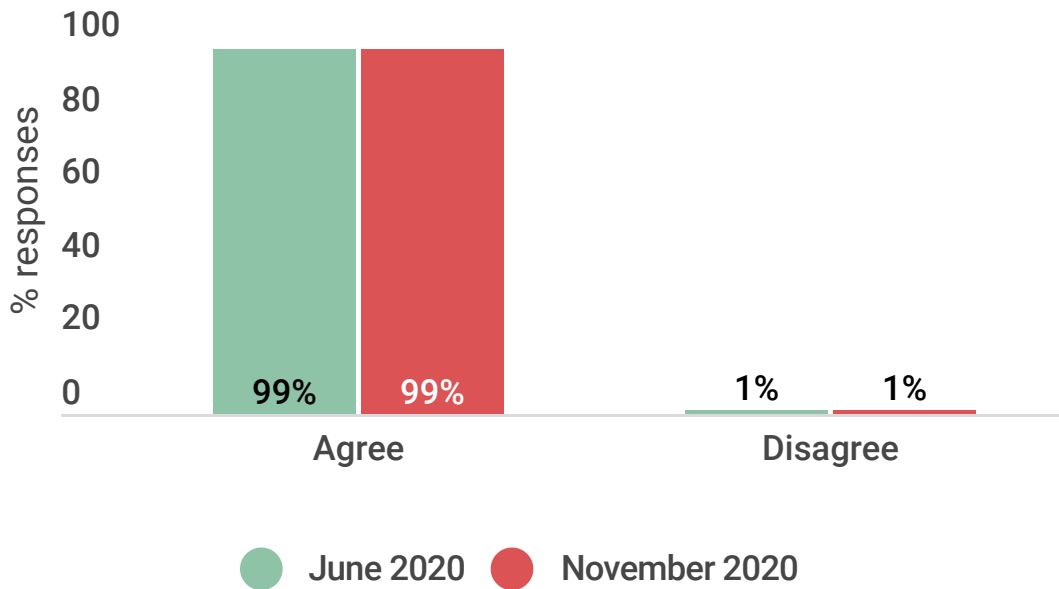
Survey Results - Homeworking

Q12. How satisfied are you with your current working from home arrangements?

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
June 2020	49%	35%	10%	5%	1%
November 2020	54.5%	32.6%	10.6%	1.5%	0.8%

June 2020   November 2020
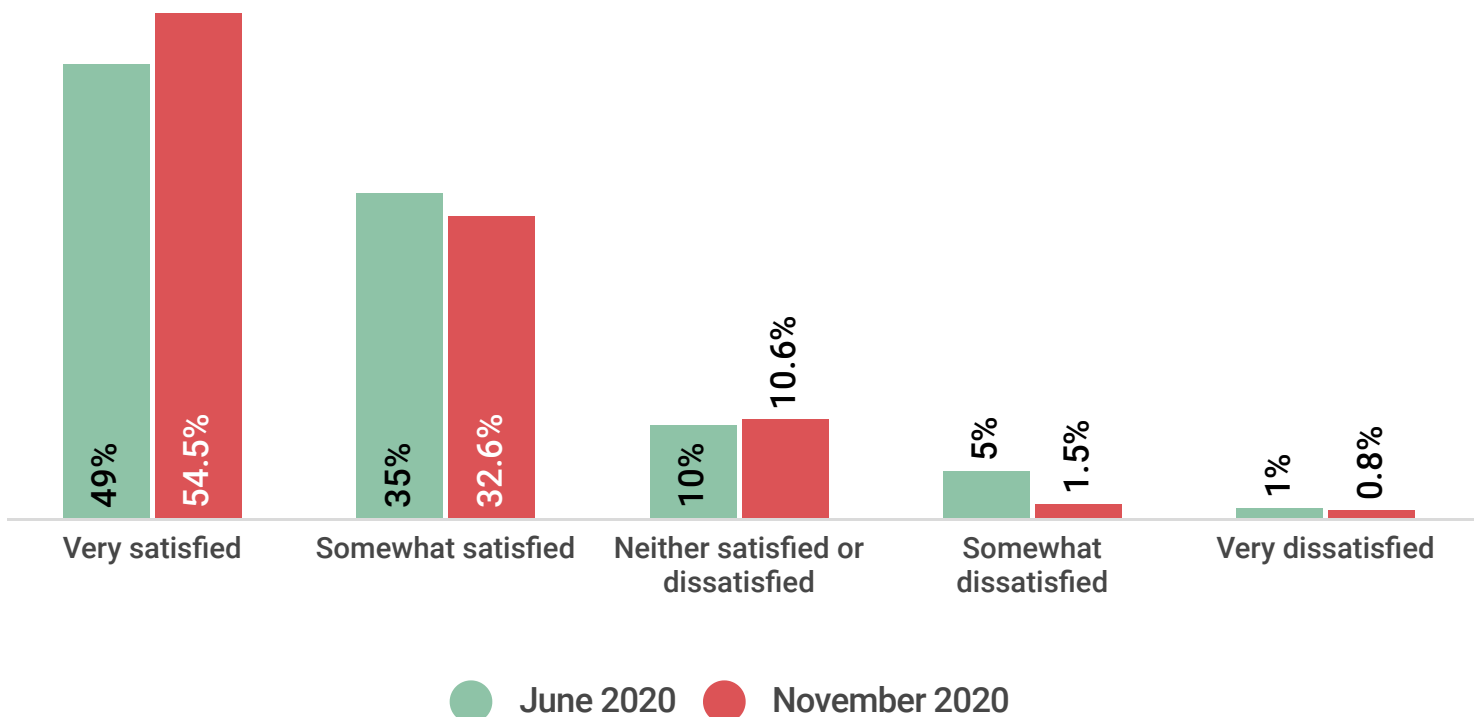
Survey Results - Homeworking

Q13. What could be done to improve your working from home arrangements?

Nothing
13

Physical workspace
8

Provide office equipment
6

Improved network / wifi connectivity
5

Days in the office
5

Better social connections
2

Covering wfh costs
1

Survey Results - Homeworking

Q14. What are the two biggest challenges you are currently facing whilst working from home?

	June 2020	November 2020

Social Isolation

No challenges

Childcare

Communication with colleagues is harder

Motivation

Anxiety about COVID-19 on my life

Too many distractions at home

I'm not looking after my mental health / wellbeing

Physical workspace

Keeping a regular schedule

No access to appropriate tools / equipment to do my job

Poor internet connectivity

Other (Too much pressure / workload is too high)

Survey Results - Homeworking

Q15. Do you have the equipment you need in order to do your work from home?

100 80 60 40 20 0 — % response

Yes: 91% / 95.4%
No: 9% / 4.6%

● June 2020 ● November 2020
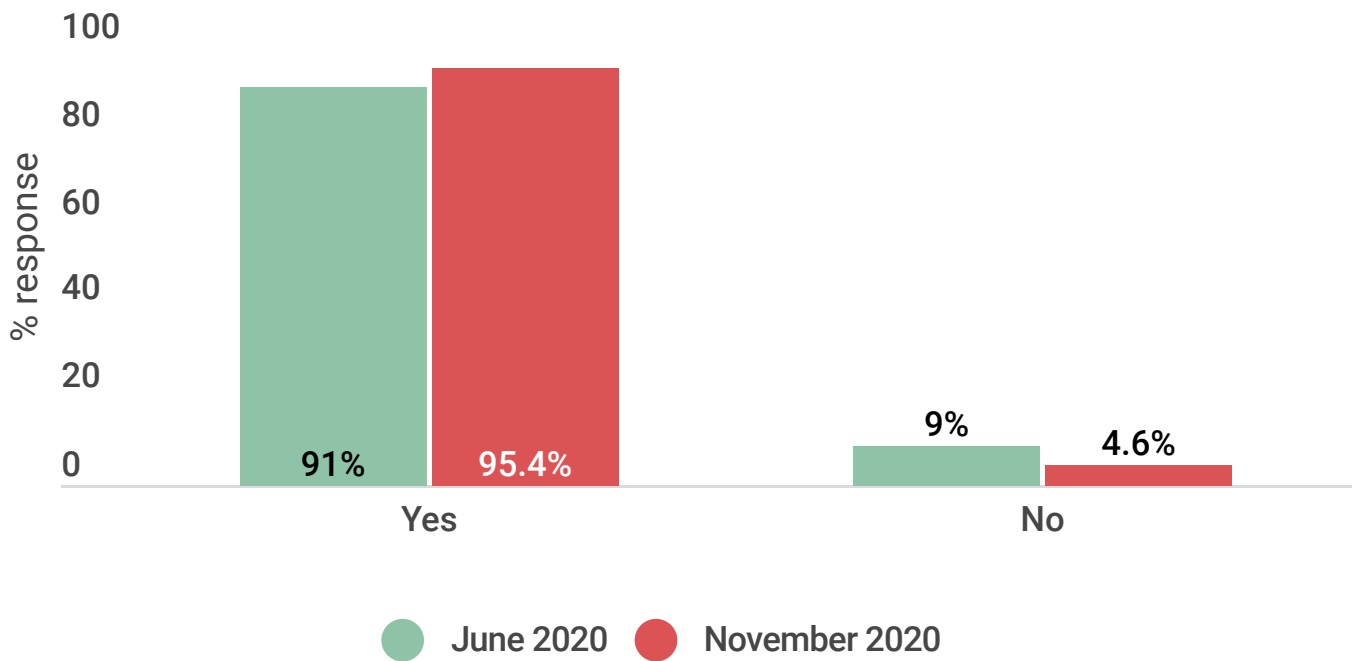
Q16. Do you have a workspace where you can work from home?

100 80 60 40 20 0 — % response

Yes: 95% / 97.6%
No: 5% / 2.4%

● June 2020 ● November 2020
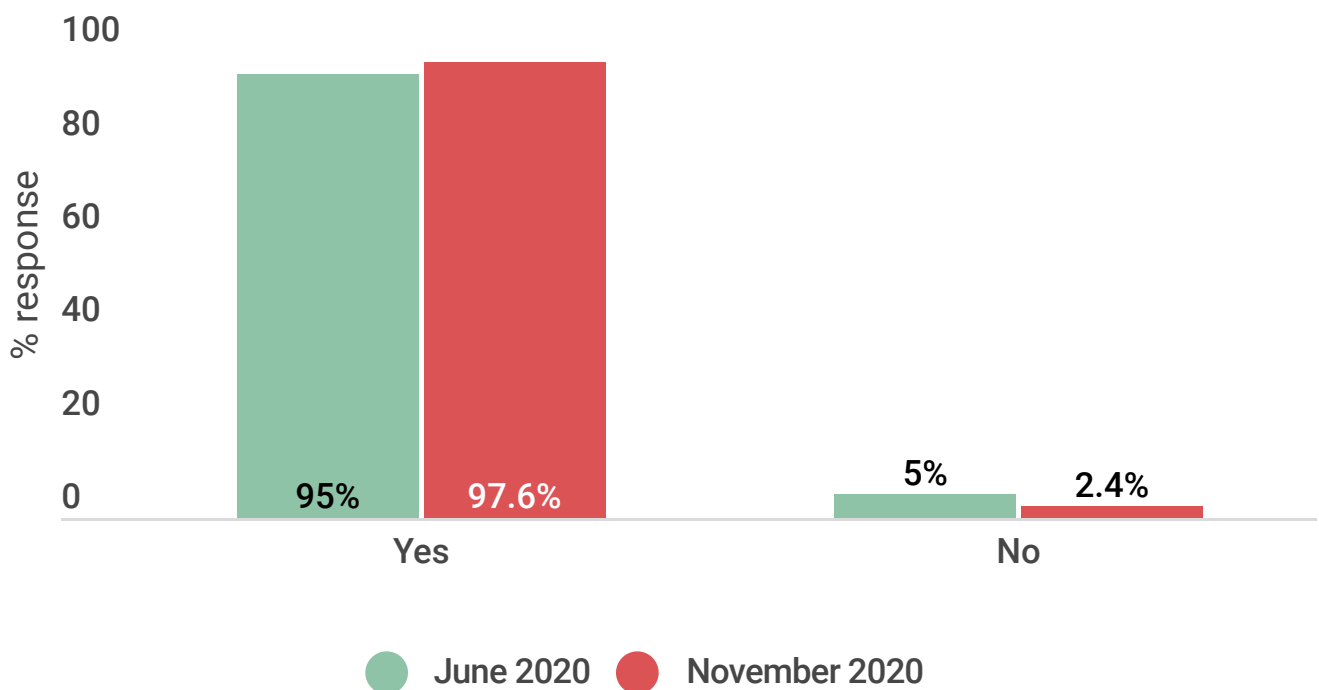
Survey Results - Homeworking

Q17. How often do you keep to a regular schedule when working from home?

	Every day	Most days	About half the time	Rarely
June 2020	62%	30%	6%	2%
November 2020	63.8%	30.8%	3.9%	1.5%

● June 2020 ● November 2020
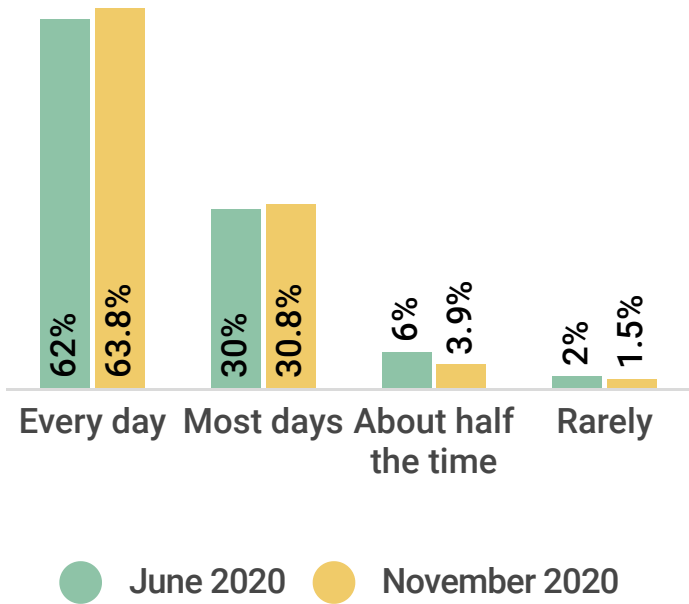
Q18. How would you assess your productivity?

	About the same	More productive	Less productive
June 2020	61%	30%	9%
November 2020	56.9%	35.4%	7.7%

● June 2020 ● November 2020
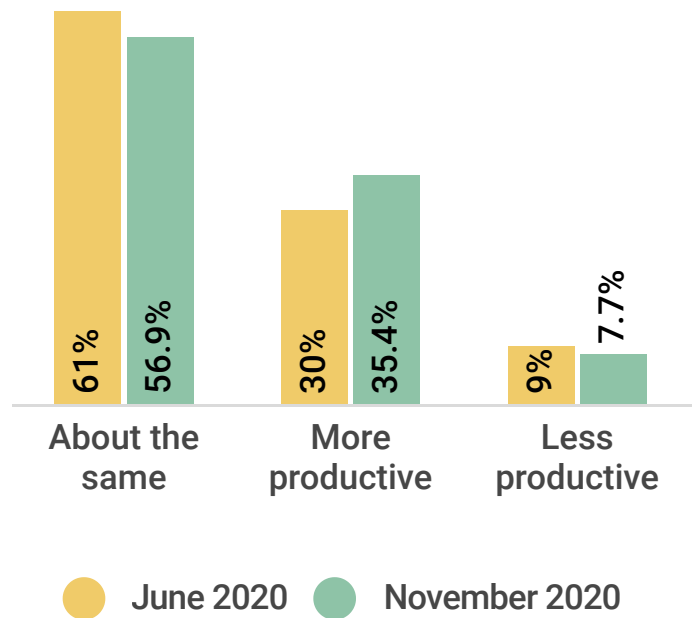
Q18. What else do you need to be able to do your job well whilst working remotely? This was an open-ended question with responses grouped as follows:

- Nothing - I'm fine
- Office equipment
- Improved network connectivity
- Ability to have paperwork…
- Access to printer/scanner
- Improved physical workspace

● June 2020 ● November 2020
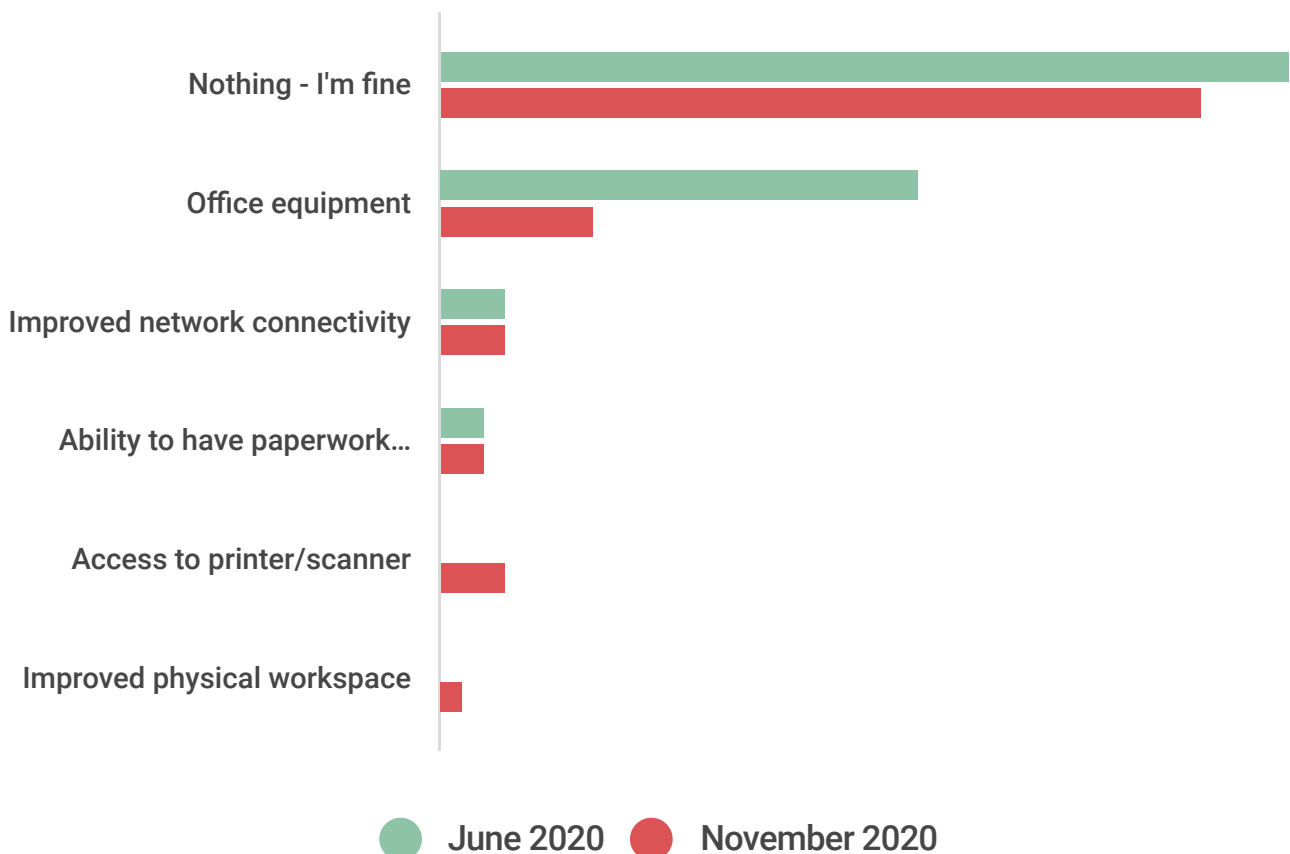
Survey Results - Returning back to the workplace

Q19. How comfortable do you feel about returning to work in the office?

% responses

	Very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Neither comfortable or uncomfortable	Somewhat uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable
June 2020	21%	17%	20%	37%	5%
November 2020	13.8%	23.1%	20%	28.5%	14.6%

● June 2020   ● November 2020

Q20. Which of the following concerns do you have about returning to the office? This was a multiple choice question with 586 responses in total.

- Hotdesking and general spread of germs
- Sharing office equipment with people
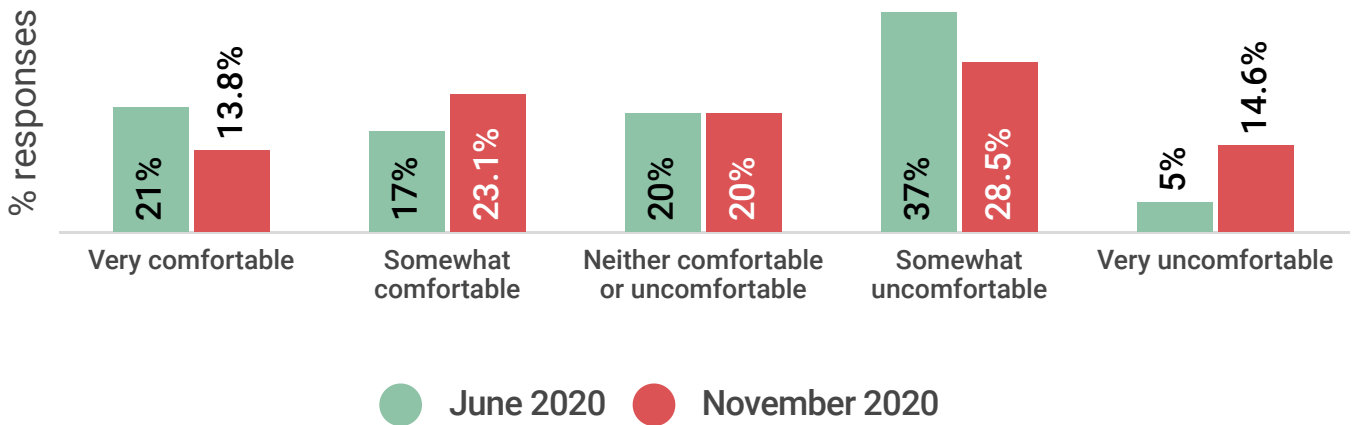- Going back to how things were and not learning from the experience
- General cleanliness of the office
- Decreased flexibility to work from home
- Organising childcare
- Potentially spreading COVID-19 to colleagues
- Having too many distractions in the office
- Decreased productivity
- Exposure to COVID-19 while communting to work
- Not being able to return to the office because of my own health reasons
- Leaving family members at home who need assistance

● June 2020   ● November 2020

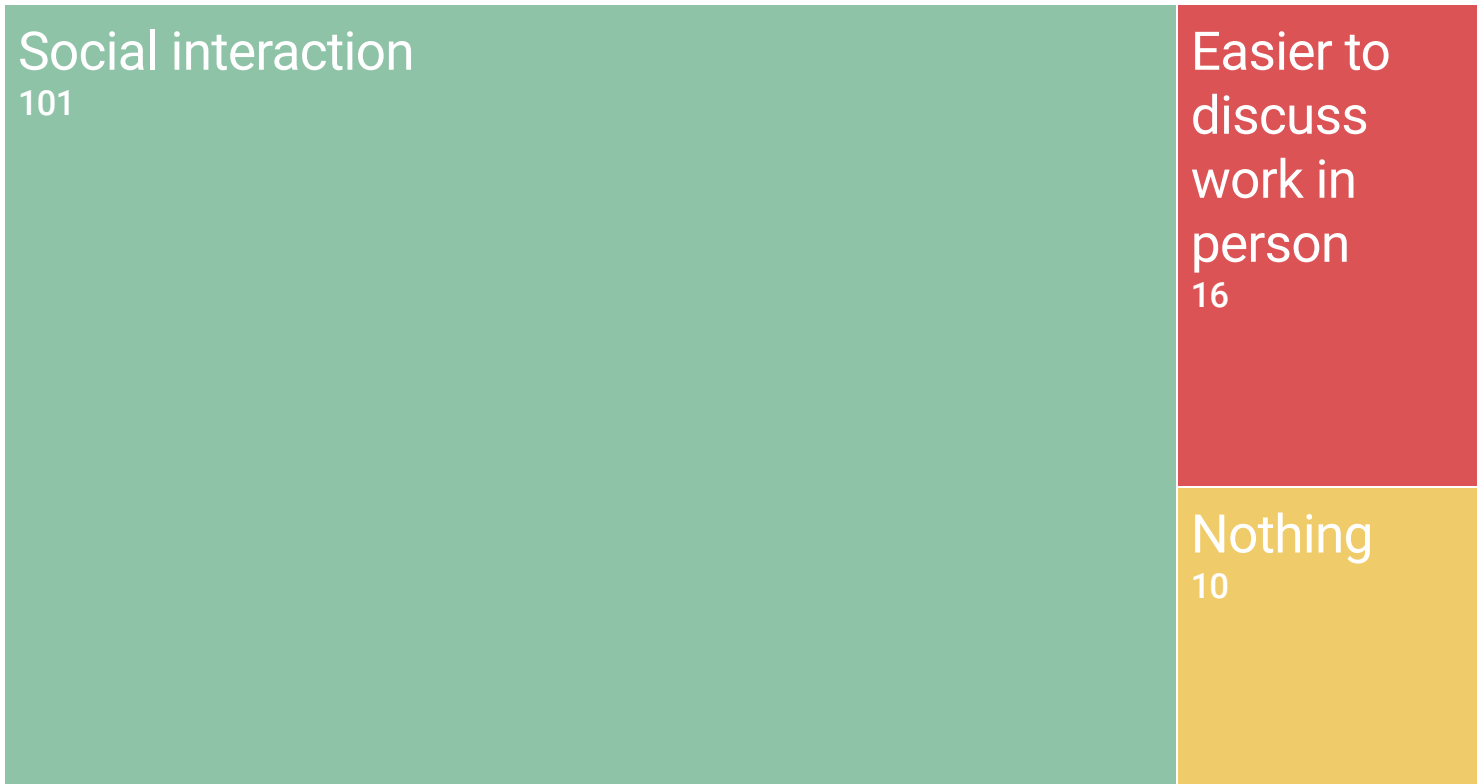# Survey Results - Returning back to the workplace

Q21. Which of the following would make you feel more comfortable about returning to work in the office? This was a multiple choice question with 984 responses in total.

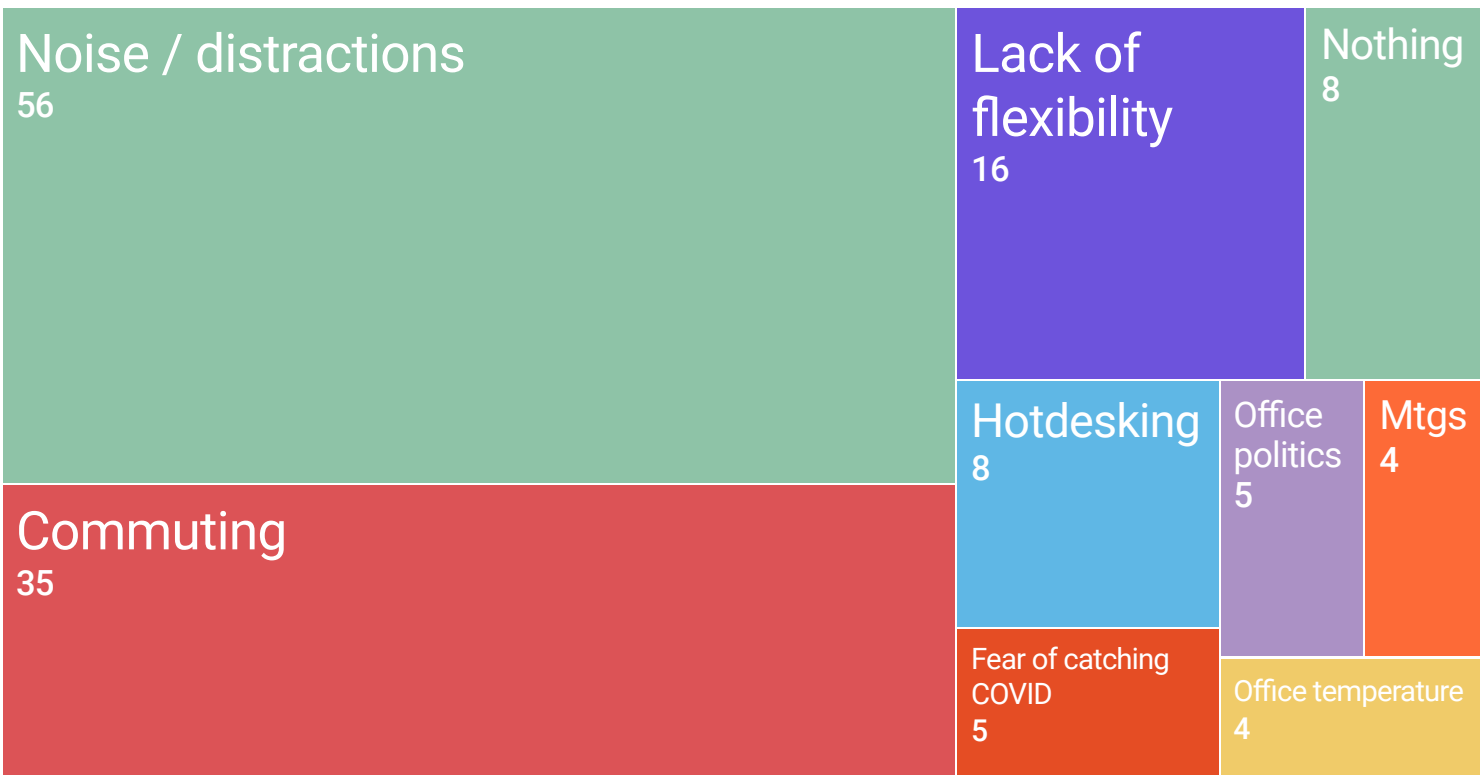| Category	June 2020	November 2020
Limiting hotdesking to reduce spread of germs	13%	12.9%
Limiting the number of people in the building	12%	12.6%
A robust cleaning regime in the office	11%	10.4%
Limiting outside visitors to the office	10%	8.5%
Availability of a vaccine	9%	9.9%
Hand sanitiser stations	8%	8.9%
Good signage so people understand the rules	6%	6.7%
Temperature checks on arrival	5%	7.2%
Installing partitions between desks	4%	5.4%
Government guidance saying it is ok to return to work	4%	5.8%
Staggering start and finish times	3%	5.1%
Having secured childcare / support for family members	2%	2.4%
Nothing would make me comfortable	2%	0.8%
Wearing masks in the office	1%	3.4%

● June 2020   ● November 2020

Survey Results - Returning back to the workplace

Q22. What do you miss most about being in the office? This was an open-ended question with responses grouped below:

Social interaction	Easier to discuss work in person
101	16
	Nothing 10

Q23. And what aren't you missing about the office?

Noise / distractions	Lack of flexibility	Nothing
56	16	8
Commuting 35	**Hotdesking** 8	**Office politics** 5 / **Mtgs** 4
	Fear of catching COVID 5	**Office temperature** 4

Q24. Given the choice, and once things return to some level of normality, where would you prefer to spend the majority of your working time?

Home	Home but with scheduled office time	Office
23% / 23.8%	60% / 67%	17% / 9.2%

● June 2020   ● November 2020
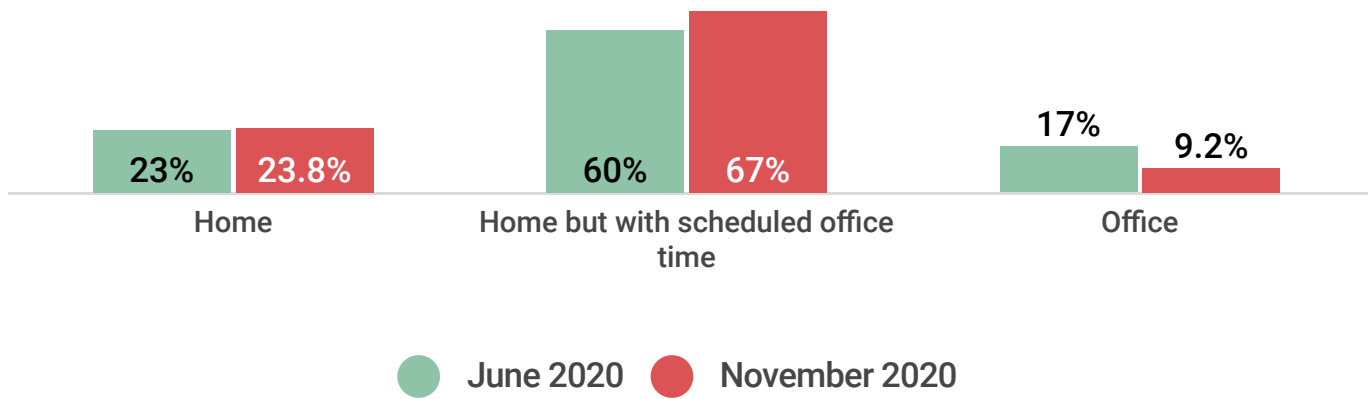
Q25. What is your single biggest work related concern right now?

- No concerns
- Job security
- Catching COVID at work
- Being able to do my job well
- Reduced productivity
- Increased workload
- Going back to the office
- Balancing work and childcare
- Training new starters / joining ...
- Feeling isolated
- Maintaining the Council's cultur...
- Mental wellbeing

● June 2020   ● November 2020