

Registers of Scotland

RoS Board

14 March 2023

Project Evolution Hybrid Working Update

Purpose

1. To provide the RoS Board with a paper detailing the current status of hybrid working in RoS, an update on how we know this is working well for RoS and colleagues and an assessment on the longer-term implications/opportunities that may come from working in this way.

Recommendation and rationale

2. The board are asked to note the progress made under project evolution.
3. The board are asked to review and comment on the hybrid working policy included in annex A which is currently in a draft status.
4. The board are asked to provide any input on the direction of travel for RoS in relation to hybrid working based on their experiences and observations in other organisations.

Background

5. People & Workspace project closed in April 2022 meeting its key objectives to ensure it had set up and created an environment for hybrid working to take flight and that the workforce were equipped to embark on this new way of working. The foundational hybrid working model was laid for the organisation to develop, continuously improve, and evolve as we learnt more about hybrid working and how it would best work for RoS.
6. Project Evolution was initiated in May 2022 with its key goal being to empower colleagues *to Explore, Experiment, Evaluate and Evolve how, where and when they work to deliver the best days work for RoS.*
7. The business case objectives are stated below:
 - ✓ Develop and evolve the culture to empower colleagues to enable new more effective ways of working
Status - Met in full subject to successful roll out of Teams Ways of Working (TWOW)
 - ✓ Explore & evaluate space sharing initiatives in MBH & SVP with other SG organisations & third parties

Status - Met in full. External tenants now occupying parts of MBH & SVP. Memorandum of Terms of Understanding (MOTU) signed off by external tenants as well as further interest shown from other SG organisations

- ✓ To inform future policy in relation to hybrid working
Status - Met in full. Will be complete with successful delivery of hybrid working policy
- ✓ To establish a 2024 hybrid roadmap. The direction of travel for RoS
Status – Met in part. Continuous Improvement plan to be produced as part of project closure/handover activities.
- ✓ Explore RoS colleagues working in other SG localised hubs
Status – Met in part. Currently no appetite for this. Recommendation to revisit as part of future of estates strategy and alignment with Scottish Government hubs programme

Current status of hybrid in RoS

8. Utilisation rates for the Edinburgh office is around 65% based on the reduced capacity through condensing down from 6 floors to 3. Utilisation of Glasgow SVP office is slightly lower. We have observed more onsite workshops and team events taking place in the main office in Edinburgh which provides the rationale as to why there is higher usage in this building. (Annex B **office utilisation stats*)
9. The number of people not revisiting the office sites since being inducted has come down from 543 people in August to 395 in December 22 with the current number being 229 which equates to roughly 20% of the total workforce.
10. There are three wings in Meadowbank House which are now occupied by external organisations. This includes Geovation who currently occupy the Innovation wing.
11. Revenue Scotland and Scottish Futures Trust currently occupy and share space on the floorplate in SVP.
12. There seems to be a settled state in the numbers that frequent the building and working remotely. The floorplates have been configured where they can scale and increase capacity should we see an uptick in the numbers.
13. The approach to hybrid working in RoS is a work style that enables the staff to blend working from different locations: home, on the go, or in the office. Professional research and case studies have demonstrated that hybrid working can unlock many opportunities and deliver benefits for the organisation.

What has been delivered to date

14. Two mission teams were set up to look at the culture and how teams/colleagues can work effectively with the other mission team focusing on the physical spaces in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

15. The project undertook a health and safety compliance mini mission as part of the project delivery. The mission was to ensure all RoS employees working remotely had a safe and suitable remote working environment. The mission was to ensure a duty of care to employees had been carried out, recognised and to identify and mitigate any ongoing risk to employees working remotely. PCS worked in partnership throughout the mission and promoted any joint communications. The health and safety representatives in PCS provided support and advice throughout. This demonstrated good working in partnership to ensure colleagues wellbeing and safety was at the forefront in developing hybrid working.
16. We recognise that there is a need for colleagues to feel supported when coming onsite. A concierge service and tech bar were set up as pilots to assist colleagues working onsite with troubleshooting and alleviating any pain points in setting up hybrid workshops, team events or onsite training. The tech bar allows people to make an appointment to pick up or drop off IT kit or get some assistance from IT when onsite.
17. The project engaged with staff through colleague voice sessions to gather feedback in a bid to improve office spaces and their remote set ups. This was strengthened by a you said, we did publication on RoSnet.
18. Working alongside Gartner to gain insight and sharing information with other organisations developed a greater understanding of what makes hybrid work through professional research, exploration and experimentation.
19. We have proven that other external organisations can effectively space share the estate with RoS with organisations taking up tenancy and signing off on a memorandum of terms of occupancy agreement.
20. Communications have played a pivotal role in the project by promoting effective hybrid working through the refresh of the hybrid principles, developing guidance, hints and tips on how to work effectively in a hybrid model. A hybrid working video was also produced to promote the re-design and facilities onsite which has led to RoS being shortlisted for the Smarter Working Live Awards 2023 in the category of Improving Spaces: Creating a Great Place to Work.
21. The final project deliverable will be the draft hybrid working policy (Annex A) which outlines RoS's position, gives more information about our expectations as a hybrid working employer, and provides a commitment to all colleagues that hybrid working is set to continue at RoS. The policy has been produced by the learnings and evidence gathered throughout project delivery.

How the hybrid environment is working for RoS & the continuous improvement aspect

22. Hybrid measures (Annex B) have been identified to track and monitor over time.
23. Performance & productivity: After almost a year of working in a hybrid model, teams are getting to grips and settling into hybrid working which is reflected in the

latest performance stats. Teams are establishing their ways of working to best deliver recognising the blend of working remotely and when to carry out team-based activities onsite.

24. Sustainability: Work is ongoing to continue to drive up occupancy of estates. The decisions taken throughout project evolution have helped inform the future of the estates strategy which is actively being developed.

25. Efficiency: There will be a reduction in expenditure over the coming years as external organisations share the space. Implementing hybrid working and the technology to effectively operate in a hybrid model has resulted in cross site travel being reduced by 75% when compared to the pre-covid year.

26. Environmental factors: Paper usage has significantly dropped as a result of digital advancements and reducing the number of multi-function printing devices onsite. The winter heating strategy trial has also provided a reduction in our carbon footprint and efficiency savings in the last quarter of 22-23. The project has also promoted greener ways of travel by providing active travellers facilities onsite which allows them to cycle, run or walk to work.

How do we know it is working for colleagues

27. The Hive wellbeing survey analysis provided useful insight around the elements of hybrid working with areas to improve on which included: a sense of belonging, team connectedness and the future of working in a hybrid fashion. All areas are being addressed through the team ways of working and the hybrid working policy which will demonstrate a commitment to working in this way longer term.

28. Wellbeing-related data from the CSPA is also positive e.g. *"I achieve a good balance between my work life and private life"* – our score of 84% ranks us as the 6th out of over 100 of all participating departments.

29. No pattern evident relating to how much time people work at home vs the office – the lowest scores were typically seen in the group who spend equal amounts of time working at home and in the office (although that represented only 17 people in the survey analysis)

30. Encouraging dataset overall in relation to work life balance and wellbeing with a **7.3 average score** for the hybrid related questions (over 7 is positive)

31. An internal audit advisory piece focusing on RoS duty of care/Health and safety compliance and the approach to shaping the hybrid policy is underway with the field work due to be carried out last week in February and the final report to be shared mid-March. The findings/recommendations will then subsequently be shared with RoS Board and EMT.

Longer term implications & opportunities

Key opportunities	Response (Enabling controls)	Ownership
Total cost of operations/ under used office space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included within "Cost" benefits profile / measures of success (guiding principle 10) Robust Estates strategy & Tech strategy Maximise space sharing options 	Future of the estate strategy
Culture shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of overarching principles to influence, promote and adopt new ways of working in hybrid sense. New ways of working strategy 	HROD/new culture led project
Environmental factors/Carbon footprint reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included within "Environmental" benefits profile / measures of success (guiding principle 11) Less travel, less paper, less energy usage - Link to Climate Change & Sustainability strategy 	Future of the estate strategy
Ability to serve the customer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included within "Customer" benefits profile / measures of success. Increased awareness of customer behaviours Inclusive design in a hybrid world 	Customer Experience

Other considering factors

32. Unknowns around hybrid working such as career development, networking, long term mental welfare will all have to be carefully monitored as hybrid working continues to evolve.

33. The demographics of people working in this way and the digital age becoming the norm will play a part in how we work in the future.

34. Any findings from the internal audit on hybrid working that may come as recommendations that were not part of our thinking or planning.

Conclusion

35. The main conclusion is that hybrid working will continue at RoS. The organisation is committed to this flexible working arrangement that can benefit everyone at RoS and we recognise that it makes good business sense to provide a range of flexible working opportunities for colleagues. The insight and data that has already been captured will provide a sound basis for informing strategies and the direction of travel. Hybrid working will evolve over the coming years and RoS will continue to assess what works best for the business in this everchanging landscape.

36. RoS will look to sustain the gains made under Project Evolution by continuing to improve the way we work and shaping the culture which will form the foundations of a high performing organisation.

37. A recommendation for closure of the project would be to incorporate a key risk under the corporate level key risk register in which ongoing hybrid working could provide positive opportunities for RoS or pose as a potential threat.

PMO Benefits Manager
March 23

Annex A: Hybrid Working Policy (draft status)

Our flexible working statement:

At RoS, we value and respect difference and are committed to building an inclusive culture by creating an environment where you can balance a successful career with your commitments and interests outside of work. We believe that you will do your best at work if you have a work life balance. Some roles lend themselves to flexible options more than others, so if this is important to you, please raise this with your line manager who can discuss flexible working arrangements of mutual benefit. Hybrid working aims to provide flexibility and choice to colleagues about where you work most effectively depending on the activity being undertaken and supports us performing at our best.

Hybrid working policy

1.1 We feel it is important as an organisation to have an agile, adaptable, and flexible workforce with a culture that doesn't focus on when and where you work, but rather values contribution and commitment and recognises individuals and teams where objectives and goals are met and exceeded. RoS is committed to offering hybrid working as part of its broader flexible working offering.

1.2 We aim to offer flexibility wherever possible to enable colleagues to be their most effective, while maintaining a healthy work life balance. Hybrid working means that all colleagues who can perform their roles outside the office can work some of the time remotely. The amount of time you can spend outside the office will depend on the role you perform and how it impacts your team and others. Some roles are office based out of necessity.

Remote working will usually be completed at home, but may also take place in other UK locations, so long as you are able to perform your role safely and guaranteeing the confidentiality and integrity of RoS business. We don't offer overseas working.

You can find further information in our Clear Desk and Screen Procedure and in our Hybrid Working Guidance.

1.3 We believe there will be a collective benefit, and a positive impact on our service delivery, from all colleagues spending some time in the office. However, colleagues whose roles are not office-based will have the opportunity to work most of the time from home if there is no adverse impact on their team or others who rely upon them. It may be necessary for colleagues to attend the office to complete specific tasks or activities, if we have concerns about their ability to be productive at home, or if we/they believe their wellbeing is suffering because of remote working, but most colleagues will be able to work some of the time from home on a continuing basis. Colleagues will be expected to attend the office following a reasonable management instruction, where the line manager will endeavour to give reasonable notice.

1.4 Any colleague may choose to work full-time from the office. Our offices are available for many purposes including collaboration, team days, meetings, focused work, or wellbeing. You can find the office open hours here ([link](#)).

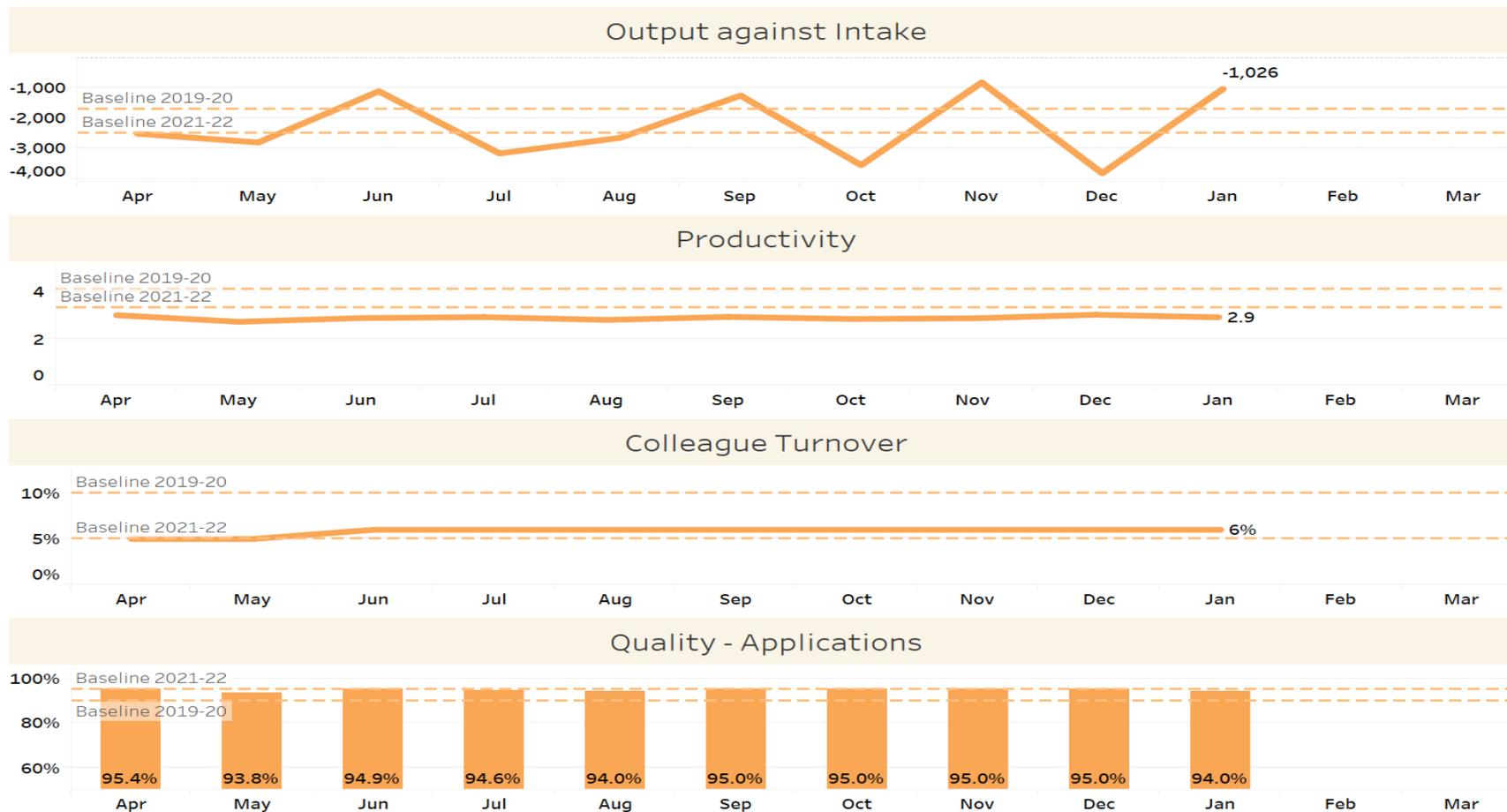
Hybrid working principles:

- ✓ *Work is what you do, not where you go*
- ✓ *We focus on outcomes to bring out the best in our colleagues and enable maximum value*
- ✓ *We're committed to the wellbeing of our colleagues*
- ✓ *Our teams are unique - hybrid isn't a 'one size fits all' approach*
- ✓ *Teams are empowered to make the right choices about how they operate together to best deliver the services they are responsible for*
- ✓ *We learn through experimentation*
- ✓ *We all take responsibility for working flexibly to deliver excellent services to our customers*

Annex B: Hybrid working measures of success

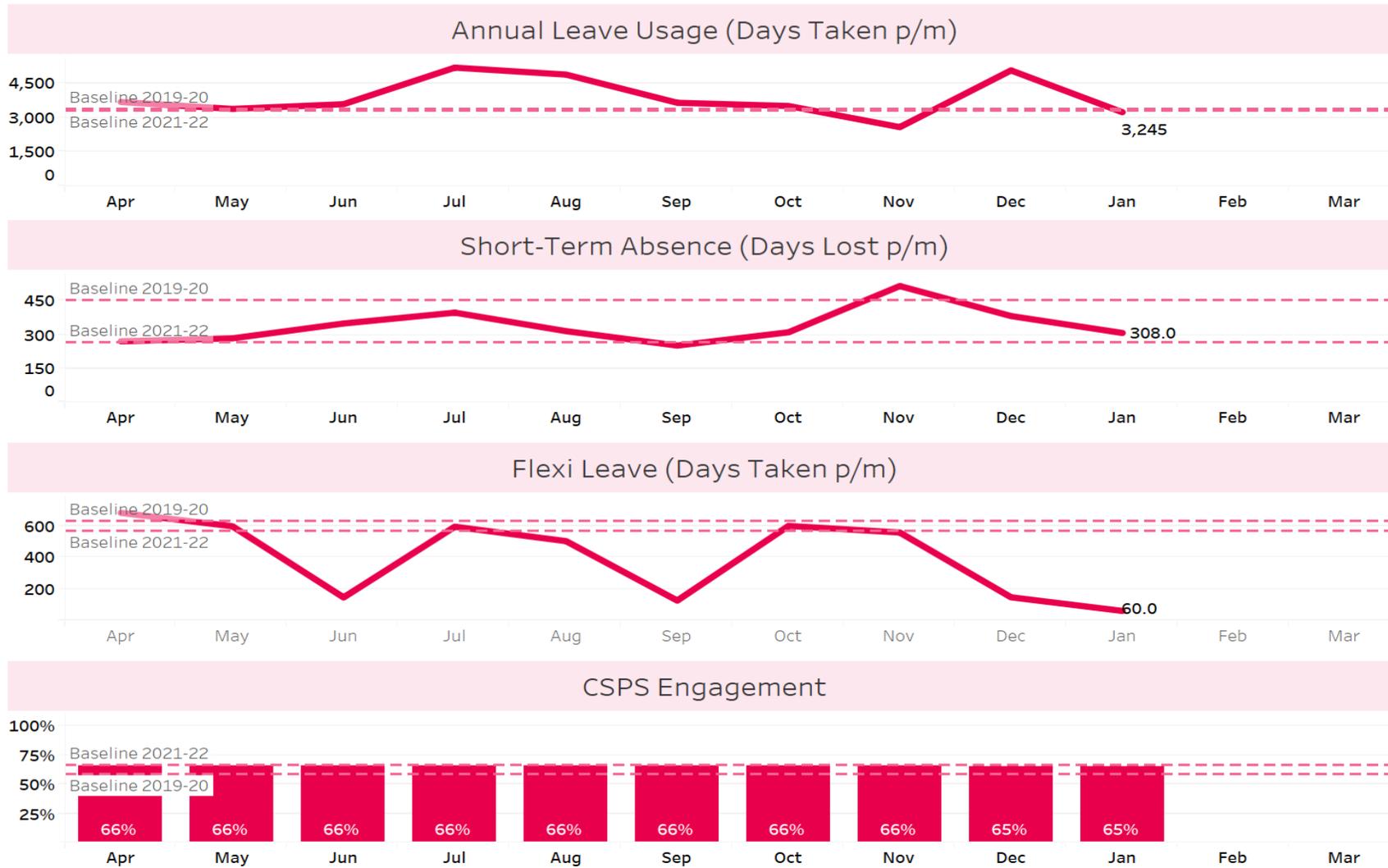


Measures of Success: Performance



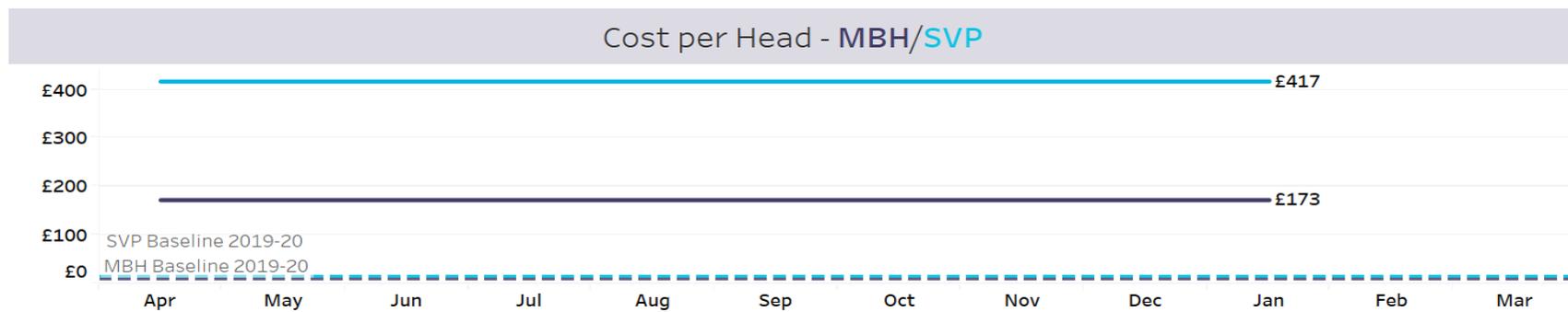
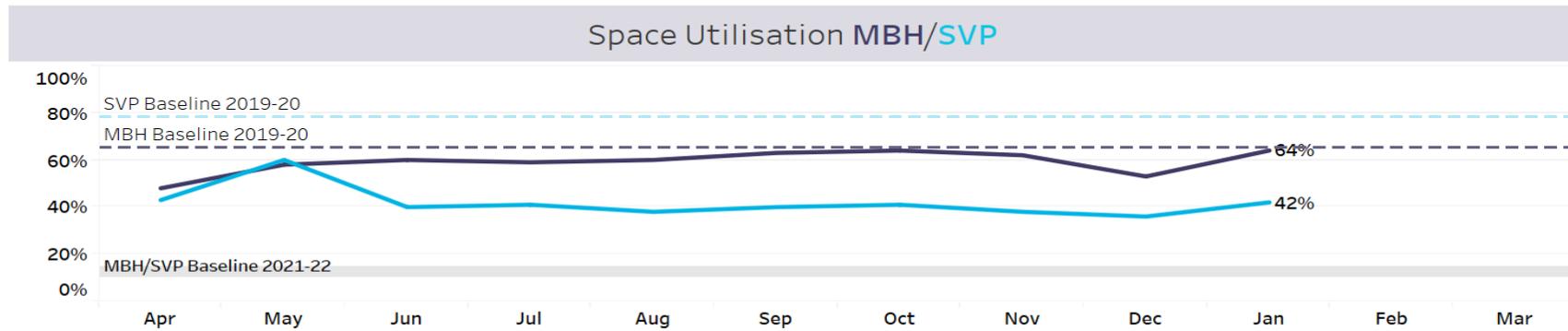
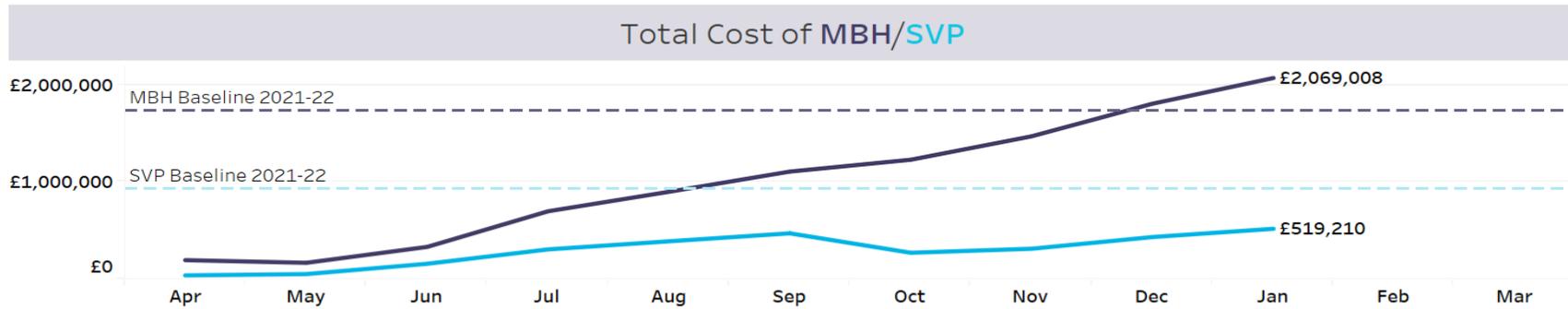


Measures of Success: People





Measures of Success: Efficiency





Measures of Success: Environmental

